Letters from America. Volume 2

LETTERS FROM AMERICA.

BY JOHN ROBERT GODLEY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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LETTERS FROM AMERICA.

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Isle aux Noix, October.

Yesterday morning D—and I started in a waggon and pair for the Eastern townships, the southern part of which border upon the inlet of Lake Champlain, called Missisquoi Bay. They have been settled since the conquest, and are the only part of Upper Canada held by the tenure of free and common soccage. The population is almost entirely British and American. The country we drove through at first was very ugly and wretched; VOL. II. B 2 flat, marshy, and thickly peopled; but as we approached the shores of the bay there was a very evident improvement, and Philipsburg, where we dismissed our “team,” is a beautifully situated village, backed by a fine hilly country, occasionally swelling into very respectable mountains, covered to the top with the richest autumnal foliage. The bay is a fine land-locked lake, and we could not from the shore discern the communication with Champlain. At Philipsburg we called upon Captain—, who commands one of the independent troops of light cavalry that were raised in 1839, and are quartered along the

frontier. He was a civilian, and having distinguished himself by zeal and activity during the rebellion, received the command of this troop as a reward. The soldiers are very well off, having four shillings and three-pence a day, their arms, and a certain allowance for clothes. Every thing besides they provide for themselves, so that it requires a capital of 30 *l* or 40 *l.* to start with, for horse, saddlery, and kit; a condition which ensures a respectable class of men. They are all young fine-looking men, and unmarried (generally farmers from the old country), with the exception of a very few old soldiers, and they enlist for general service, but for two years only. There are three of these troops, and they are found so effective and manageable, 3 requiring neither barracks nor commissariat, and of course beyond all temptation to desert, that it is supposed they will be kept up. A young Irishman from the neighbourhood of K—, who belongs to one of them, told me that an economical man could save 30 *l.* a year after the first outlay. To give you an idea of the cheapness of forage here, I may mention that Captain—has contracted for the supply of his troop with twelve pounds of oats, ten pounds of hay, and eight pounds of straw (the regular cavalry ration) per man at sixpence per day. In Ireland the average is one shilling and sixpence. This frontier was a burrow of sympathisers, and it was close to Philipsburgh that Grogan was taken, whose apprehension on the wrong side of the lines made such an outcry, as you must remember.

We had heard so much of the duck-shooting on the bay, that we determined to stop a day here and try our luck, so we crossed the lines, and spent last night at Highgate springs, in Vermont state, in a large green and white hotel, fitted up for the accommodation of those who come to drink certain mineral waters of some repute in the neighbourhood. The season is over, and we occupied alone the “banquet-hall deserted.” It reminds me of a visit I once paid to Nonnenwerth, on the Rhine, after the summer was passed, only that B 2 4 there the hotel was larger and damper, and, above all, had no fireplace in it, so that I went to bed after dinner to keep myself warm; here, though the rooms looked a little cold and empty at first, the good people soon made us very comfortable with tea and a good fire. The landlord, a thorough Yankee, received us in his bar *à la Trollope* , with his feet

on a high stove, his chair thrown back on its hind-legs, a cigar in his mouth, one eye shut, and his hat on. He was rather cool and contemptuous at first, but softened by degrees, and ended by treating us very well; so much so indeed that the next morning, when we got up to go out shooting at four o'clock, though it was bitterly cold, he insisted upon getting up too, and giving us our breakfast before we started. (This sort of friendliness and good nature, be it remarked—for there was no idea of an additional charge—is highly characteristic of Americans.) The morning proved so stormy, that the “hunters” with whom we had made an appointment could not bring over their boat, and though we paddled about for some time in two wretched little punts, about as seaworthy as a washing-tub, we got very few shots, as we were afraid to venture into the deep water: I do not believe that under any circumstances we could have done much. The plan adopted by the hunters here is to paddle in one 5 of these little punts, which do very well for one person, through the grass and reeds; and after waiting for perhaps half a day they get a shot at a flock sitting, and kill a dozen or more. They never shoot flying, and hardly ever at a single bird, so that nothing can be more different than their idea of sport and ours. With us the love of field-sports is a mixed feeling, consisting partly in a remnant of the original savage, wild-beast destroying instinct, and partly in the pride of skill; neither is sufficient alone, for it gives us no pleasure either to throw up a stone and fire at it, or to kill a bird sitting. These pot-hunters have, however, taken a different view altogether, and express great surprise that a man who can afford to buy game should take the trouble to hunt it. “I should like to enter into partnership with you,” said an American to me once: “you should kill, and I should eat.”

From Highgate we proceeded eastward, through the townships, having crossed the frontier again at Philipsburgh, and found the country beautiful, thriving, and productive. It is from hence that Montreal market is almost entirely supplied with meat and hay; and I should think it would be well worth while for a speculating farmer to look about him here before he goes higher up the country. Land is cheap, compared with its price farther B 3 6 west: a good improved farm may be bought for eight or ten dollars per acre; and there

is always a good market at Montreal, for the French, in its immediate neighbourhood, can maintain no competition with the British race. Our landlord drove us in a waggon, with a pair of fast trotting ponies, and appeared quite the Jehu. I thought he had probably been, at some former time, “connected with the coaching department,” from the knowing way in which he worked his team; but, on inquiry, I found that, on the contrary, the principal part of his life had been spent in piloting steamers upon Lake Champlain: this summer, for variety, he has tried his hand at keeping the Spa Hotel, but not having found it a good speculation, he is now ready to turn stage-driver, or Methodist preacher, or any thing else that may suggest itself. We could not get a waggon at Philipsburg to take us to Frelitzburg, where we were to spend the night, so he consented at once to go on with us, though he had not made any arrangements for doing so before he left his hotel, and would have remained with us indefinitely, as long, in fact, as we chose to give him three dollars a day. This fertility of resource would rather astonish an English hotel-keeper: old Newman, of Barnet, for instance.

Frelitzburg, (or “Slab city,” as our landlord 7 preferred calling it, *euphoniæ gratiâ* , I suppose,) is very prettily situated, in a richly-wooded valley, with a great deal of park scenery and orchards about it. The woods are now glowing with the most luxuriant richness and variety of colour; no description or painting ever gave me an idea of the autumnal foliage here; indeed, the faintest imitation would appear exaggerated to any one who has not seen it. Scarlet, purple, violet, orange, in every possible diversity of shade; the hill-sides are positively dazzling in the sunshine. I used to quarrel with American scenery for its monotony of colouring: I am now disposed to find fault with its extravagance. We found a tolerable country inn, and a very civil landlord, though not very refined in his ideas. He showed me, as usual, into a double-bedded room, (for they never can suppose but that two brothers would prefer sleeping in the same room,) but upon my saying that we should prefer occupying a second. if convenient, assented at once. However, when I retired, at an early hour, I found both beds prepared and turned down, so I again proceeded to remonstrate, and then found, to my great amusement, that our

landlord's original idea had been to give one of the beds to D. and myself, the other to our driver; to humour our fastidiousness, he had consented to put “the other gentleman” B 4 8 somewhere else; but it had never entered his head, for a moment, to suppose that we required three rooms for three people. We contrived, after all, to get, what the sailors call, “a blow-out of sleep,” which our early rising had earned for us; and after a sociable breakfast, *en trio* with our Jehu, started to go up a mountain, called the Pinnacle, about five miles off to the eastward.

I am no advocate for mountain-climbing in general: in a picturesque point of view, the map-like prospect one gets never repays the trouble; but this day it suited me very well, as I obtained thereby a better idea of the character and formation of the surrounding country than I could otherwise have had without travelling through it. It appears to have more of the elements of rural beauty, than any part of Canada that I have seen; there is hill and dale, with small lakes in the hollows, and a great deal of grass land, indeed hardly any thing else, except a little Indian corn: these townships are supplied with grain from the States, while they supply the markets of Montreal, Quebec, and the Lower Province generally with live stock. The hills are covered consequently with cattle, sheep, and horses, grazing through the woods, and over the clearings, and the view generally reminded me of the scenery in the prettiest parts of Germany, or what is better, the more 9 wooded counties of England. It was a hard pull up the hill, and the view was proportionably extensive; we could see as far as Montreal on one side, and the whole breadth of Lake Champlain, for forty miles, to the southward. It was bitterly cold when we got into our waggon to return; in fact, I fully expected snow, of which there was a fall here about a fortnight ago, covering the Pinnacle for a day or two: however, it brightened up into a beautiful evening, and by sunset we got to the island, after a drive of thirty-five miles.

It is just nine weeks to-day since I steamed up Lake Champlain, on my way to Canada, little thinking I should remain there so long; but I have found so much to interest me, that, though I have now seen something, at least, of most of its districts, and diligently sought for information, by mixing every where with its society, I should be by no means sorry to

remain another month in it, and have no doubt that I could profitably employ my time. The only subject, I think, which I have left myself much to say upon that would interest you, is the state of the church in the province; and I may as well take this opportunity of describing the impressions which my observation of it has produced. At first I was inclined to take an unfavourable view of this subject: I thought I B 5 10 could perceive a lack of qualifications among the clergy, as well as a lack of interest in religion among the people, which seemed to promise badly for the future; but I have since had reason to change my opinion for the better. True, there is still a great deficiency both of churches and clergymen, and by no means the anxiety to supply it which one would wish to see among those who suffer by the spiritual destitution, which is its result; but that deficiency is not near so great, in proportion to the population, as it was some years ago; and though the clergy are, I should think, still on an average inferior to those at home, yet, in this respect, too, there is already improvement, and there is likely to be more. I dreaded lest, as the population spread itself, unaccompanied by religious ministration, sectarian, irreligious, or even practically atheistic habits might be forming themselves, which all subsequent efforts might fail to correct; but I have since seen and heard of so many instances where a zealous and active clergyman has been appointed to a neglected district, and has not only succeeded in reclaiming all that had wandered from the fold, but added greatly to the original flock, that I have now strong hopes that it is not yet too late for the church to recover her lost ground, and occupy her proper position.

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The only direct state provision for the clergy consists in the clergy-reserves, being, as you know, one-seventh of the land in each township. It has been finally decided, that of this seventh, five-twelfths are to go to the church, the rest partly to the church of Scotland, and partly to the other religious denominations in the province, to be distributed at the discretion of the governor and council. Now this land, though likely to be very valuable at some future period, is wholly inadequate, at present, to its purpose, and the friends of the church are particularly anxious that their part, or rather what remains of it, should

not be disposed of *now* , but that it should be kept till it has become more valuable. There are great economical objections to this, as I said before, but it is difficult to see how the future wants of the church can otherwise be prospectively provided for; such, at least, is the opinion of those who are the best informed among her friends. In the meanwhile, the 160 clergymen who constitute the “Canada Mission,” are provided for by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, who give 100 *l.* a year each to the country clergymen, and to some few, more. The archdeacon of Kingston, has 400 *l.* a year, and the bishop of Toronto 800 *l.* a year, as rector of Toronto; as *bishop* , the latter receives no additional income, notwithstanding B 6 12 the demands upon his purse, which his station involves, and the enormous labour and expense of visiting (*as he does*) a diocese, which extends from Lake Superior to the Ottawa. The clergy have, besides, whatever the voluntary contributions of their flocks may amount to, which is far less, indeed, than it ought to be, but may, perhaps, amount to 25 *l.* or 30 *l.* a year on an average. I should have observed, by the bye, in speaking of state assistance, that the Bishop of Montreal is paid by government 1000 *l.* a year, and that, in lieu of an annual grant of 5000 *l.* (I think), which used formerly to be made to the Society, government has taken upon itself the endowment of a certain number of parishes. Now, though I am fully convinced that *wealth* is any thing but desirable for a church, yet when we consider the general style of living among the poorest in this country, and particularly recollect that there are no “prizes,” I do not think the clergy are, by any means, sufficiently remunerated; that is, there is not enough to make properly-qualified men, who are not willing to sacrifice self-interest entirely, (which, how few are or can be!) contented to give up the comforts of advanced civilisation, and the prospect of success in other professions, and to plunge into the backwoods for life. Hence, it must be confessed, that 13 the ministry of the colonial church has heretofore been principally supplied by a class of persons inferior to our own—I do not mean to say in piety, but in learning and talent; and even of these there is far from being a sufficient supply. The Society would even now increase its list of missionaries, and there are very many districts which are loudly calling for spiritual aid, but candidates are not to be found.

To remedy this state of things, and for the promotion of church objects generally, a society has lately been formed under the auspices of the bishop of Toronto, including all the principal members of the church, both lay and clerical; and knowing, as I do, the practical zeal and wisdom of those who take the lead in directing its operations, I am inclined to hope much, with God's blessing, from its establishment, and to regard it as likely to be productive, as it is symptomatic, of increasing energy in the good cause. The objects of this society I will state, by abridging the account of them contained in a letter of Chief Justice Robinson to the bishop, which led to its formation:—1. To provide a permanent and adequate support for the bishop, and endowments for the cathedral. 2. To provide a permanent and adequate support for three archdeacons. 3. To procure such an augmentation of the incomes of 14 the clergy, as shall ensure them 200 *l.* per annum each. 4. To provide for placing one missionary at least in every settled township. 5. To build in every township a church and parsonage of brick or stone. 6. To provide travelling missionaries for such parts of the country as do not come within the limits of any organised township: and, 7. To provide for the Indian missions.

For a supply of funds the society looks, 1. To the clergy reserves remaining. 2. To the funds which have arisen from the sale of reserves. 3. To the contributions of the friends of the church in lands. 4. To the contributions which may be raised in money, both here and in England. The diocese of Toronto consists of about 400 townships, each containing about 66,000 acres, or 330 lots, of 200 acres each. Now it is contemplated to build and endow, at first one, and ultimately two churches in each township; and it is calculated that for each endowment 600 acres of good land will be necessary. It is hoped that, as the price of land is now moderate, the society will gradually be enabled to effect this, and then by degrees extend the parochial system along with the extension of the surveyed townships. It is impossible to overrate the importance of the object aimed at by these good men; in the issue 15 of their labours is involved the only chance of preserving the province permanently to Great Britain, and also, speaking humanly, the question whether Canada is to be virtually a Catholic country or not. The church now comprises about 100,000

members; and, contrary to Lord Durham's anticipation, has latterly increased considerably in proportion to the population. With an efficient church machinery, I have no doubt that the number may be at once nearly doubled; for much the larger proportion of those who have wandered from her fold, did so because they had no shepherd, and who can blame them? They found themselves in want of spiritual food or ministration, and they naturally betook themselves to the nearest source, whatever it might be, from which they imagined their wants could be supplied: but they are still reclaimable; and if the leading members of the church at Toronto be enabled to carry out their scheme, I have no doubt that they will be reclaimed, and those who remain in the communion of the church confirmed in her doctrine and order.

The bishops of Montreal and Toronto are both zealous men; and the clergy, who are indeed very much subject to their control, from the entire patronage of the dioceses, such as it is, being at their disposal, seem to follow their example in this 16 respect, and to be generally good churchmen. Now, as I consider the foundation and earnest of progress and success to consist in the appreciation and maintenance, on the part of the church, of her true position and privileges, this alone would inspire me with hope; but I can already perceive evident proofs of increased efficiency in the clergy, consequent, as I believe, upon the increase of true church principles which has taken place within the last few years among them. Mr. T. told me that in one district where he was placed, and where only forty-seven persons were returned as members of the church in the census, he obtained the signatures of 250 persons to a high church petition within a year after his arrival; in another, where only twenty-three church-members were returned, the clergyman within one year baptized ninety children; and I have heard many gratifying instances of a similar kind. One bad effect of the insufficient supply of candidates for orders is, that the bishop is compelled to put every one that offers himself at once in charge of a district, whereas it would usually be far better for both clergy and people if a certain probation, as in the case of curates at home, were to be gone through; indeed, from the equivocal position which the church holds here with respect to the state, the office of her

ministers is often one of peculiar 17 delicacy, and requires an amount of judgment and experience which few possess at the age when they take orders. The bishop has lately, in order to supply in some measure the want of a regular theological education, appointed a diocesan professor of divinity, to whom a small stipend is paid by the church society, and who takes as pupils those who wish to qualify themselves for orders. The present professor is Mr. Bethune, of Coburg, whose acquaintance I had the pleasure of making when I was there, and whom I have to thank for much information upon the subject of the Canadian church, though of course he is not responsible for any of the opinions which I have expressed; he has now, I believe, some ten or fifteen pupils. I hope they will succeed in getting a churchman as professor of divinity in the new university; indeed, it is strange that there should be any doubt, considering that the governor has the appointment; but the Opposition want to have such divinity taught as will include those tenets alone which are common to all denominations, and will give offence to none; a tolerably indefinite creed, I imagine, such a one, if it could be drawn up, would be.

The church in Canada, then, wants men and money, but the former most; if there were an adequate supply of properly-qualified missionaries, 18 I feel assured they would find no want of income, sufficient at least for a comfortable subsistence; and I cannot but think that this province presents a more obvious, hopeful, and important field than most of the less civilised countries, where so many able and zealous men are now throwing away (as far as man can judge) their talents and lives.

Education among the lower orders is in rather an unsatisfactory state in Canada; the elementary parts of it, reading, writing, and arithmetic, are perhaps as generally diffused as at home, and at any rate, where the population are so well off, as is the case here, the demand for such “practical” education will inevitably produce the supply; but at the national schools it is impossible, from the state of society and the policy of government, to impart any religious instruction. At present there is in each “district” a school, supported by the state, the master of which gets 100 *l.* a year: these schools are subject to the inspection of trustees, appointed by the provisional government, and consisting generally of the

Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Presbyterian ministers, and of any laymen who may be deemed proper for the purpose. These schools are, I believe, tolerably well taught and managed, but of course they avail nothing to the great mass of 19 the peasantry scattered through the district, which embraces a vast extent of country. Recently, by an act of Lord Sydenham's parliament, municipal councils have been established after the American mode, elected by the people, who transact the local business of each township, very much in the same way that magistrates at quarter-sessions do in England; and among their duties is the establishment and maintenance of township schools, for the support of which they are empowered to levy a tax; and the masters of which they, of course, appoint. It is very easy to conjecture, from the composition of these councils, what sort of appointments they are likely to make; as in our poor-law unions at home, politics, private friendship, every thing in short but proper qualifications, influence their selection; so badly, indeed, has the plan worked, and so great is the outcry against it, that I believe there is no doubt it will be altered and remodelled; but as there is not the least chance that government will make the church the means of educating the people, and as secular education will take care of itself where it is wanted, I look to the various schemes of state education without much hope or interest.

As far as physical prosperity is concerned, Canada only wants to be let alone; the absence of political agitation is the true recipe for her; 20 and if the governor will but prevent democratic legislation, it signifies little who is in office; a country where there is no distress is easily governed. The people are totally without grievances, even nominal; they have neither tithes nor poor-rates, and but few taxes, direct or indirect; they have an immense territory, an increasing commerce, and England at their back, to supply them with troops, money, credit, and markets. Nothing can prevent them from advancing rapidly in prosperity, except turning politicians, and cutting each other's throats, as they are too much inclined to do, about questions of which the great majority know nothing;—and so, good-by to Canada.

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LETTER XVI. NEW YORK.

JOURNEY TO THE SOUTHWARD.—FRENCH CHARACTER OF THE NEW-YORKERS.—EVENING VISITS.—THE TARIFF.—THE MISSOURI STEAMER.—COMMON SCHOOLS.—SUCCESSFUL ATTACK MADE BY THE ROMAN CATHOLICS UPON THE SYSTEM OF NON-RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.—CONNEXION BETWEEN THE SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND THE EDUCATION OF A PEOPLE.—THE ASTOR HOUSE.—LAXITY OF CHURCH FEELING AMONG EMIGRANTS.—ITS CAUSE.—THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.—CROTON RESERVOIR.—NEW YORK SHOPS.—WORKHOUSE.

New York, October.

After leaving Canada I came on by the steamer “Whitehall” to Whitehall, the southern extremity of Lake Champlain, and there took the stage to Albany; it was the best conveyance of the kind I had yet seen, as we were only ten hours going seventy-two miles, including stoppages, which form a very considerable item in the duration of a journey here; on the road you go pretty fast, having always capital horses, but each change takes ten or fifteen minutes. The driver is always changed with the horses, each man having his own team to attend to, and drive exclusively; I think this a very good plan, as he has thus 22 the undivided responsibility attached to it, but our English coachmen would of course consider it “infra dig.” Here the “professions” of coachman and hostler are upon an equality in the public eye. I need not say that you are never requested to “remember the coachman,” or indeed any other servant, except the shoe-black. The road from Whitehall to Albany passes through Schuylerville, the scene of General Burgoyne's surrender, and Troy, a flourishing manufacturing town (alas for *Ilium, et ingens gloria Teucrorum!*), and along the banks of the Hudson, which above Albany are pretty, but by no means striking. There is a canal, with two opposition lines of boats running parallel with the road and the river; and such is their keenness for securing passengers, that each of them, and the stage, had agents at Burlington, seventy miles down the lake, waiting for the steamer, who came up with us, for the purpose of canvassing. The boats will take you

for about one shilling, but they are generally, from their cheapness, so crowded, that I preferred being aristocratic, at the expense of two dollars, in my coach and four.

At Albany I called on a young barrister, to whom I had a letter of introduction, and went with him into the courts of law which were sitting, but in which there was nothing of interest 23 going on. Every time I see the American practice, I feel my prepossessions (whether derived from prejudice or philosophy) in favour of ermine and scarlet against swallow-tailed coats and black neckcloths increase. I am sure that to take away the former would diminish the respect paid by the masses to the wearers; however, the force of habit prevents me from being a very fair judge. The next day I came down the Hudson, with which I was less pleased than I expected from all I had heard of the autumnal tints in these parts. I suppose I am too late, for yellow has become unpleasantly predominant; I miss the brilliant scarlet and copper-colour of last week in Vermont and the Eastern Townships.

I met an old Frenchman on board the steamer from Alsace, who was delighted to jabber to me; he had been at Waterloo, he told me, and was wounded and left for dead, when the British *culbutèrent la garde* in the last decisive charge. He escaped being taken, however; recovered, and returned to private life till about eight years ago, when he was induced to try his fortune in the West. He told me that there are 22,000 French in New York (which I can hardly believe, though there are certainly a great many); they always congregate in cities, and leave the farming to the German and English races. New York is the 24 Paris of America, as well as its Liverpool, and the two characters are very curiously blended; the same men who are hard-working and money-making clerks all the morning in Wall Street, are fashionable and over-dressed loungers in the evening in Broadway; and the rate at which they get is fully equalled by the rate at which they spend. It seems, at first sight, odd, but it is undoubtedly true, that the Americans are the most lavish people in the world. I have observed this both on the continent of Europe and in this country: there is no kind of personal enjoyment which they seem to me to deny themselves from considerations of economy; dress, eating and drinking, public amusements, are indulged in here by every merchant's clerk who can at all afford them, to an extent equalled by

few peers' sons in England. This is evidently the result of the commercial spirit, which produces the same effect upon a nation which gambling does upon an individual; the rapidity with which fortunes are made, and the uncertainty of their permanence, produce a recklessness about saving, and a desire to make the most of good luck, while it remains. Ups and downs are too common to excite sympathy or apprehension; and *Carpe diem, quam minimùm credule postero* , is pre-eminently the motto of New York philosophy. I have just been 25 walking round some of the billiard-rooms and supper-taverns, and am quite astonished at their number and style. The absence of clubs contributes very much to the flourishing state of these establishments, as of the hotels; and I suppose the converse is one of the reasons why in London they are so far inferior to those of both the Continent and America.

Yesterday I went to church twice and heard two flowery sermons: one of them (preached by a young man with his hair about his shoulders like Irving) not without power, but both sadly deficient in taste. There was good music (the singers, I believe, being professional), but very few of the congregation joined in it, or in the responses. I used to think that our own deficiencies in this respect proceeded from the prominence which we give to the (so-called) clerk, who enacts the part of “People,” in the form of a concentrated essence, I suppose, and whose functions are taken as superseding all necessity for united worship; but here, though there is no such officer, the result is hardly more satisfactory as far as concerns inducing the congregation to join, while those who cannot read, or have not books, are deprived of the assistance of his loud and distinct pronunciation. It would, I think, be an improvement upon both plans if the person who led the VOL. II. C 26 responses, instead of being stuck up in a box by himself, were to sit undistinguished among the congregation, *primus inter pares.*

One evening I visited Mrs.—, whose acquaintance I had made at Rockaway, and met several gentlemen, who called in the course of the evening, uninvited, to pay their respects. I like this plan of evening visits extremely; they are, I think, more sociable than morning calls, and certainly cause less loss of time; as to the objection, that they interfere

with domestic comfort by breaking in upon the family circle at the hour when it is most enjoyed, that is easily obviated by each lady having a particular day or days in the week, on which she is understood to be at home, simply to receive the visits of her friends, not to entertain, *i. e.* feed them.

As of the two most fashionable topics here, commerce and party-going (with its accessaries), I prefer the former, I soon became deeply engaged in a discussion on the new tariff with Mr. B., an “influential” member of the Home League (for the protection of domestic industry). It does seem to me the most extraordinary infatuation that ever possessed the mind of man, to violate, as the Americans do, all the true principles of political economy, in order to make a manufacturing out of a naturally-agricultural 27 population. We violate them for the exactly opposite purpose, and that purpose (together with the danger of interfering with such immense vested interests) constitutes our only excuse for so doing; but one would think that the present state of our manufacturing population—a state to which from its very nature it must be perpetually liable, ought to be a lesson and a warning to them to avoid, as long as possible, touching the accursed thing; they ought to be only too happy to have our hotbeds of iniquity, at Manchester and Birmingham, to do their dirty work for them, while they revel in the free and happy life of the woodman and farmer.

Mr. B.'s theory is that the people are naturally so attached to agriculture, that it is necessary at first to give them the stimulus of inordinate profits by a protective tariff, in order to tempt them into branches of trade, which, if once fairly started, they will be able to work without protection; so that he would only protect those manufactures which would, according to him, if the people knew their own interests, want no protection. Now, it seems to me that the Americans are of all others the people to whom this theory will least apply, and with whom the strict rules of political economy may be most safely acted upon; because there is no people so shrewd in calculating C 2 28 their own interests, and with whom early habits and associations have so little weight; so that, I believe, there is no case in which, if a trade or manufacture were a natural and healthy one (in

the economical sense, *i. e.* would pay), it would not attract at once the necessary capital. In arguing upon this subject, foreigners invariably rely upon the example afforded by the history of our manufacturing system, which, say they, we protected and nourished till it was old enough to go alone, and *then* (when able to undersell the world) began to clamour for free trade; and it is vain to answer (however justly one may do so) that it is to her physical and social advantages, and not to her protective system, that England owes her commercial and manufacturing superiority; the relation between protection and success is far more apparent at first sight, and less mortifying to national vanity (in the case of those countries whom we have beaten), so that it is at once set down as undoubted. As to the higher ground of the moral and social expediency of cultivating an agricultural rather than a manufacturing population, Americans in general will not appreciate or acknowledge it at all; they point to Lowell, as a proof that degradation and immorality are not *necessarily* connected with a manufacturing population, and then proceed to conclude 29 that they are not *naturally and generally so.* The gratifying condition of the Lowell factories, as I have before explained to you, is the result of temporary, and what may be called accidental causes; the evils which a widely-spread manufacturing system carries in its train spring from the operation of clearly-established and universal laws.*

* It is but fair to say, that I do not remember in the course of the numerous conversations which I had with Americans upon this subject, to have heard, in a single instance, any stress laid upon the existence of our corn-laws as a reason for enacting retaliatory tariffs, and “protecting American industry.” On the contrary the advocates of this policy always defended it upon the ground of its absolute advantages, and rather quoted the admitted tendency of our policy (of late years) towards free trade, as a reason for additional restrictions on their part, upon the principles stated in the text.

This morning one of my American friends called on me, and took me on board the North Carolina, where a court-martial was sitting *to try* delinquents for a variety of offences, which had occurred principally, I think, on board the ships engaged in a late exploring expedition to the South Seas. I am not sailor enough to compare, or, indeed, perceive

any difference between, this vessel and ours; I only know that every thing appeared particularly clean, orderly, and well arranged. I was surprised and delighted at being hailed by name from the forecastle by a tanned C 3 30 and bearded tar, who presently informed me that he was an old acquaintance (though I had forgotten his face), and had often been “cocking” for me in Donaweel woods. I next went on board the Missouri steam-frigate, which sailed at two o'clock for Savannah. I was at dinner in the ward-room when she got under weigh, and really there was so little of the tremulous motion of a steamer about her, from the excellence of her machinery, that I did not know till I was told of it that we had been at full speed for some time. The Americans have only four war-steamers altogether, which is rather singular, considering the immense steam navy possessed by ourselves and the French, and the important part which steam must play whenever there is a naval war again. I suppose they expect that some new invention will before that time have superseded it, and that it is not worth while to invest much capital so unproductively —a bold, but somewhat rash, speculation. I went down about eight miles in the Missouri, as far as Staten Island, where she lowered a boat and dropped me to come up in a ferry-boat. The harbour and its islands, covered with woods, gardens, and villas, the white sails, the forest of masts, and the city in the distance, have really an exceedingly pretty effect from. Staten Island, though I should hardly agree with 31 a young lady who told me to-day, that nothing she had seen in the Mediterranean, including Constantinople and Naples, was half so beautiful. I am really coming round seriously to admire the sincere conviction of the superiority of every thing in America which her children entertain; it may be annoying to foreigners, but it is very pleasant to themselves, and contributes most materially to their national strength. I assure you I am delighted whenever I find a similar feeling to exist among ourselves, and only wish we had more of it, as being one of the best securities for the stability of our institutions and the integrity of our empire.

My name has been put down as an honorary member of the public library and reading-room in Broadway, by a friend who has a share in it, and consequently the privilege of introducing a stranger. It is a very excellent establishment, apparently well conducted, and

supplied with “every thing which the most fastidious could desire;” in short, a very tolerable substitute for a club. After looking over the papers there we went off to see the “common-schools,” which are also excellent of their kind; they are supported by a public tax, and the children pay nothing. The instruction professes to be entirely secular, and to exclude all religious teaching; but it is C 4 32 found, as must be the case, impossible to preserve perfect consistenc in this respect, and the rule is so far infringed upon that the Bible is read, though all explanation is forbidden, and in most of the schools business is opened by the master saying the Lord's Prayer, which is a decided outrage on the consciences of scrupulous Jews. This last practice is, however, connived at, not prescribed. There has been lately, as you may recollect to have heard, a great agitation on the part of the Roman Catholics upon this subject, and they have so far succeeded in it that the law is now to be altered from what it has hitherto been, and whenever a certain number of people apply, a proportional part of the education fund is to be allotted to them, to educate their children after their own fashion. Other communions will of course follow this example, and the result will, in the opinion of many, be a break-up of the whole system of common and non-religious education. The fact is, that human nature naturally revolts against it, when not perverted by nineteenth century theories: three hundred years ago it would not have been thought of for a moment by any sect or party; the very term “non-religious education” would have been considered as self-contradictory, and as tending to confound the ideas of *instruction* in certain comparatively unimportant branches with 33 *education* in its highest and most comprehensive sense; that it should be now commonly received is in itself symptomatic of the disproportionate importance, which our age attaches to all that is “of the earth, earthy.” As yet I know of no instances where the principle involved in it has been carried out, or attempted to be so, in practice at home; but here everybody thinks that it is fully established, and till lately has maintained that it is advisable and good. There is now, however, as I have said, a reaction against it, which, unless the American mind be entirely materialised, must, one would hope, spread and prevail. Whether the direction which it has taken in asking for a separate proportion of the common fund be a right one, is another question, and one which I should be inclined to dispute. I cannot conceive a

body of men, conscious of holding the position of supremacy which the Catholic Church claims for her ministers, at the same time acquiescing in and accepting obligations from a system which recognises them simply as one among many sects, equally true and equally useful. The quality of the instruction given at the New York schools is exceedingly good, as it well may be, for the salaries of the masters are very large, in proportion to the ordinary scale of literary remuneration in this country; they vary according to the number of C 5 34 scholars, so as to create an emulation among the recipients, and some are as high as 1000 dollars a year. The primary schools for little children, and the girls' schools, are taught by women, who get from 200 to 400 dollars a year. I was greatly pleased with the neat, well-dressed, and healthy appearance of the children, and with the excellence of the rooms and machinery. There are schools for the coloured children, taught by blacks, and the master of one that I visited, a very intelligent negro, told me that he received 700 dollars a year. The little “blackberries” read, wrote, and ciphered, in a manner which quite astonished me; both the pronunciation and the calligraphy were infinitely superior to any thing I have seen in a similar rank of life at home. There is such a demand for this sort of instruction here, and the Americans are so sharp-sighted with respect to their material interests, that they scruple at no expense to secure the best that can be got of the kind.

It is, however, I think, a mistaken and shallow notion to attribute the intelligence, precocity, and cleverness of the people, to the excellent education provided for them: those who do so confound cause and effect; the education is a symptom of the intelligence, and not necessarily, though of course usually, co-existent with it. The true causes of American sagacity and worldly wisdom 35 are to be found in the circumstances of the country and the nature of its institutions; every man has an ample scope for his exertions, and a certainty, or at least a reasonable prospect, that they will be rewarded; every man is forced into social and political activity; he feels that he is of consequence, that he has a stake in the country, and an influence, more or less direct, upon the administration of its affairs; he feels, too, that in the race of private individual advancement there are prizes within his reach. These are the feelings which develope and exercise his faculties, and

give him such an immense advantage, as regards success in life, over the “masses” in Europe. Of course where such a state of things exists there will be a demand for reading, writing, and every other branch of secular instruction; and where no external obstacles interpose, it will naturally be supplied; but if the supply comes first, if the instruction be provided, while the excitements to make use of it are wanting, it will be vain to expect any effects upon national character. Take the example of Prussia: there every child is driven to school, and forced to imbibe a certain quantity of such instruction as the government thinks fit. Now, I have not the slightest doubt that the suppression of individuality (as it were), the interference on the part of the state with the *liberum C 6 36 arbitrium* of parents in the education and disposal of their children, does far more to retard the progress of national intelligence than the education given does to advance it; or that if an American from one of the southern states, who, as is often the case there, had been debarred from opportunities of acquiring school-instruction, were compared with a Prussian who had gone through the regular state course of education, and who fairly represented that class of his countrymen who are not officially employed, his superiority in resource, energy, and activity of mind, would be nearly as remarkable as if the circumstances of their education, as it is miscalled, had been reversed. I am not now speaking of the moral and religious effect of the two systems, but of their effect upon intellectual advancement. Instruction is not education, even in its purely secular sense; and to force it upon the people, while their social and political condition precludes them from having any interest or motive for its use, is, with reference to national progress, as absurd as it would be to give a man a sword, and impose a heavy penalty upon him if he drew it.

I dined with a friend at the Astor House hotel, which is really quite a curiosity, from its enormous size and admirable arrangements. There are no less than 135 servants, and 500 guests can be 37 accommodated, notwithstanding which there is more order and regularity and good attendance than in almost any country inn that I ever saw. The waiters are drilled like a regiment of soldiers, and your bell on the fourth floor is answered in two minutes. We had a most sumptuous dinner, with literally “all the delicacies of the season;”

what is more astonishing is, that you are allowed to take your meals at any hour you please, without extra charge; yet for board, lodging, and attendance the price is only two dollars a day; it is to me quite incomprehensible. The ladies' table is separate from the gentlemen's, but their male friends have the entrée, and indeed every respectable person who expresses a wish for it. The boarding-house system, which prevails so generally here, is in some respects analogous to that of clubs with us, but has what I cannot but consider the great disadvantage of including women as well as men in its operation. Whatever bad effects clubs may have in destroying or weakening the domestic tastes and habits of a man, they at least leave the attractions of his home untouched; these may be long disregarded, but they will sooner or later prevail, and accordingly we find in fact, that married men comparatively seldom continue to frequent their clubs, at least during the hours usually devoted to society. 38 The custom, on the other hand, of transferring one's household gods *en masse* from their own proper altars to the drawing-rooms of the Astor or the Tremont, seems to an Englishman little short of profanation; he could not bear to see his wife or sister sitting down to play and sing after dinner in a hotel before a promiscuous party in a public room, any body that pleases going in and out. I do not say that this is the practice among the best society in America, but I have certainly seen it often done where members of such were present, and by persons apparently of the same calibre, without producing the slightest observation.

On Wednesday I went over to Brooklyn, in Long Island, to breakfast with a clergyman, Mr. I—, to whom I had brought letters of introduction. Nothing could exceed his kindness; he wanted me to take up my abode in his house during my stay in New York, gave me letters to his friends in other cities, and heaped all sorts of attentions upon me. We walked after breakfast to see a very handsome church, on the island, the first tolerable edifice which I have seen of the kind in the States. Neither here, however, nor in any other which has come under my observation, is the principle of having free seats recognised; all are “pewed,” and appropriated. This is of less importance here, as comparatively few of the lower 39 or poorer class are in the communion of the Anglo-American church.* Mr. I.

complained bitterly and justly, that the majority of churchmen in that rank come over here from Great Britain with such very lax notions upon the subject, and with so indefinite a sense of the peculiar position of the church, that they fall quite naturally into the hands of Dissenters in this country, if they happen to be nearer to a meeting-house than to a church, or if the preacher in the former suit their taste better. While at home the mere fact of the church being the establishment, the most important and predominant communion, and the only one which involves no peculiar contribution towards its support from its members, preserves them by a sort of *vis inertiæ* from leaving it; but here, finding her only one of many churches or sects, that stand on a level in the popular opinion, and never having heard the doctrine inculcated, which teaches that there is a broad line of distinction between them, they consider schism as a matter of absolutely no importance.

* Query. Is this cause or effect? To some extent both; but, I suspect, principally the latter.

The Roman Catholics hardly ever do this; with very few exceptions, they remain firm to their communion, because they have always been taught 40 that communion with the Catholic Church is ordinarily necessary to salvation, and that schism is a mortal sin. The fact is, that we are embarrassed by our position as “Protestant Catholics;” a variety of circumstances, chiefly political, have led us, particularly of late years, to adopt, in our controversy with Rome, a Protestant, instead of (as we were fairly entitled to do) a Catholic line of argument; the people have become habituated to view church matters from a Protestant point of view, to look upon the Reformation as a mere Protestant movement, and to sink, practically, and forget the doctrine of a visible Catholic Church. The consequences of this, politically speaking, are incalculably important; the authority of the Church is crippled, its organisation loosened, its rulers are afraid, and with some reason, to revert to their ancient and legitimate claims, lest the people should carry out, as they think, legitimately, the principle which has been taught them, and join or form a sect which tallies better with their individual notions of what is right. There is much plausibility, nay, force in the objection made to the assertion of Catholic views; “if you act so you will drive people to dissent.” I admit that there is much danger of doing so, and that

it constitutes a powerful argument for caution and delicacy; but why is it so?— *because we have taught that dissent 41 is no sin.* We suffer by our own wrong; “Neque est lex justior ulla.” A most pregnant illustration of the evil effects of our practical teaching in this respect (assuming that it *does* signify what communion a man belongs to) is afforded by the manner in which those who have lived under it act when they come out here, and the contrast presented by the conduct of Roman Catholic emigrants.

Mr. I. introduced me to one of the professors at the Theological Seminary, and with him I went to see it. It is supported partly by voluntary contributions and partly by endowments, and managed by the bishops of the States. I attended evening service in a room which they use as a chapel: it was well performed, and there was good music, in which all the pupils joined. The “University education” in the States is usually completed at the age of eighteen, so that a youth begins to read for his profession at a period when we are still laying the foundation in studies of a general nature, and are usually still at school. The great boast of the Americans is the forwardness of their children, and it certainly appears to be fully justified; I have hardly seen a genuine, infantine child; they are all little men and women, dressed like their fathers and mothers, and hardly less sharp and ready in mind and manner; and so 42 it goes on through life; the boys are men, and the men (and women) prematurely old. They undoubtedly go a-head, and get over the ground in living, as in doing every thing else, faster than other people.

After service we called on the bishop, to whom I had the pleasure of being introduced. He lives in the plainest way, though his income is, comparatively speaking, tolerably ample (6000 dollars a year, and a house); he is the only prelate in the States who is well supported, and in his case the funds proceed from the interest of a vested capital, raised by subscriptions for the purpose.

Yesterday morning I went to see the Croton reservoir, from which the city is supplied with water; the New-Yorkers are justly proud of this work, which certainly appears to me to surpass every thing of the kind that I have seen or heard of. The water is brought from a

distance of thirty-five miles through a tunnel, lined and paved with brick; it is carried by an aqueduct over one river, but, with this exception, is covered and carried underground throughout. It is just completed, and one hears of nothing else: the inspectors came down the whole way in a boat a few days ago, a long subterraneous navigation. The undertaking cost 12,000,000 dollars. I have 43 been even more struck during this visit than before with the strange and foreign appearance of the city; the equipages would be tolerably good, quite equal, I think, to those of Paris, if it were not for the slovenly appearance of the servants: very few wear livery, and it is considered unpopular and aristocratic to require it: the horses are invariably good, both in shape and action. On many of the shops are the strangest and most unaccountable “affiches.” I see one advertising for sale “Johnny cakes, warfles, muffins, and slapjacks;” another “flour and feed-store, relishes at all hours;” and a hundred others equally quaint. Then you see of course negroes, mulattoes, quadroons, &c. in every variety of shade, mixed occasionally with Indian blood, but Indians are far more rare here (one to twenty) than in Canada. All these things prevent one from ever feeling for a moment at home, notwithstanding the universal brogue of the labouring population, which is nearly as Irish as in Cork.

I went yesterday also to visit the workhouse, which I found, to my surprise, to contain 2500 inmates, including nearly 500 able-bodied men. Nothing could be worse conducted; it is quite an exception to what I have heard is the general character of American institutions, as respects order, cleanliness, and discipline. There is no 44 separation of the sexes, no enforcement of labour, no superintendence, no restrictions upon readmission as often as drunkenness, or laziness, may make it a desirable temporary refuge. The old English poor-law system, with all its abuses, is in force, with the additional evil that those entrusted with the administration of relief are dependent upon the popular suffrage for their situation, and of course find it convenient not to be very strict in their regulations. The very paupers are permitted to go and vote at the municipal elections, upon which their own superintendents depend for their tenure of office, so that there is a direct premium upon popularity-hunting in the administration of the funds. Nothing but the peculiarly favourable circumstances

of the country, under which pauperism to any great extent cannot exist, and the prizes of industry are great, prevents this system from becoming such a crying evil to society, as would ensure its alteration; it affords a premium upon indolence and immorality in the paupers, and upon corrupt mismanagement on the part of the authorities, and if the Americans are wise they will effect a complete change before it shall have become too deeply rooted and extensive in its operation to be got rid of. No poor-law can be otherwise than injurious which interferes directly with the labour-market, 45 and this of America does so even now, by giving relief in aid of wages. If such a principle be established, what effect will it have in future times, when wages shall have fallen, as in older countries, to their minimum? They are now, generally, so high, that the evil is little felt; but it exists, and must bear fruit, if not eradicated. Our English experience, too, ought to teach them how difficult and invidious it is to attempt a cure at the very time when it becomes most necessary, because that is the time when the greatest number profit by the defective system.

About three fourths of the inmates of the New York workhouse are foreigners, the great majority Roman Catholic Irish. There is a Baptist chaplain, who, I was told, has a congregation of about forty individuals. In ordinary cases the religion of the majority would be attended to in the choice of a minister, but Popery is made an exception to the general rule of toleration and indifference. I met a friend and countryman in one of the officials; he comes from K—, and on hearing my name claimed acquaintance with my father. He had been very prosperous in trade, but failed (as every one does, it seems to me from the way people talk here, two or three times in the course of a commercial life), and is now on the look-out for another opening. All the officials of 46 the establishment are whigs, appointed last year, on the accession of their party to municipal power, and fully expecting to go out again at the next elections. The paupers are allowed tobacco and snuff out of the rates, and are permitted to purchase any luxuries of which they can in any way obtain the price. I saw two or three little shops in the rooms, where fruit, cakes, pipes, &c. were offered for sale by speculative individuals, who had managed to invest capital in trade, but preferred

at the same time, very wisely, to live at the public expense. This establishment costs about 150,000 dollars a year.

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LETTER XVII. BOSTON.

SOCIETY IN BOSTON.—LECTURES.—SEDENTARY HABITS OF THE UPPER CLASSES.—AMERICAN POLITICS.—EFFECTS OF AGREEMENT UPON FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT.—NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN POLITICIANS COMPARED.—TRADITIONAL INFLUENCE OF PURITANS UPON NEW ENGLAND CHARACTER.—MR. C.'S VILLA.—FEW COUNTRY GENTLEMEN IN AMERICA.—TROTTING HORSES.

Boston, October.

I came over here from New York to escape the “Croton celebration,” which was a species of fête, with all sorts of processions, and speechifying, and fireworks; very great bores any where, and sure to be peculiarly ill got up here, where the genius of the people is by no means suited to pageantry. The weather is quite different from what it was during my last visit—clear, cool, with sharp frosts at night, and even in the day—fires not unwelcome: still it is very beautiful; I have not seen two hours' rain since I was at Toronto, nearly five weeks ago, and though it has been occasionally very cold, there has always been a bright sun; the nights, too, are beautiful, quite transparent. There are now a good number of 48 people here, though the town “season” can hardly be said to have begun. I have been delivering my letters of introduction, and much attention and hospitality is the result. The most fashionable amusement at Boston this year consists in lectures, which are delivered by literary men (even those of the greatest eminence, such as, for instance, Mr. John Quincy Adams), upon all sorts of subjects. The proprietors of the Lycæum, or some other great room, undertake the speculation, engage the lecturer at a certain price, and make a charge for admission proportionate to his popularity. These lectures

answer the same purpose as the Exeter Hall and Rotunda meetings do to certain parties in London and Dublin; that, namely, of affording to those who object to the theatre a little pleasing excitement of a partly intellectual and partly sensual kind. Of course I am not comparing the professed objects of the systems, but merely the nature of the feelings which really actuate many of those who patronize them. When I was sitting with an American literary friend (Mr.—), the other day, a man came in to ask him, on the part of the Salem Lycæum, to lecture on “woman,” at some appointed time. When he was gone, Mr. —gave me a singular account of the extent to which the lecture mania is carried. Ladies often attend two or three in 49 one evening; and so necessary is excitement and variety considered, that one lecturer is seldom allowed to give a “course;” there must be a fresh hand every night. It is a striking reaction against the Puritan principle of forbidding the ordinary amusements of the world. The love of dissipation and excitement finds vent far less innocently, in my opinion, in running to hear men preach all kinds of doctrines upon all kinds of subjects—religion, politics, or animal magnetism. It must have been where such a system prevailed that the original “charming woman” of the well-known song was produced. The custom of evening visits, which, as I have already said, I like so much, is universal; it is certainly the best plan; the evening, not the morning, is the time for “playing company:” and it is very provoking that people should not be allowed to see each other after dark without a regular invitation on a large card, and either a dinner, or a supper, or a crowd of some kind or other.

Mr. Grattan, the consul, introduced me to a club of which he is a member, and of which there are two or three at Boston: there is no library or coffee-room department (though drinks “of every denomination” may be procured), but billiard-rooms, card-rooms, and a reading-room, which is apparently not much frequented. Billiards are a VOL. II. D 50 very favourite game in America. The merchants play by way of exercise after the day's business: they hardly ever think of walking or riding for the sake of amusement or health; and, as business seldom requires more than a journey from their residences to their offices, there is very little pedestrianism among those classes who do not live by bodily

labour; indeed, their costume is so ill adapted for walking, in any energetic sense of the word, as to be quite indicative of their habits—Wellington boots, with tight straps, being universal. In New England one hardly ever meets a man who feels, or can comprehend, the interest which we take in field sports, and it is much the same with farming, gardening, and other country pursuits: very few above the rank of those who till the ground *live* in the country; the residence is always in town; and, at most, they go for two or three months in the summer to a watering-place, or a villa—a change of place which produces hardly any change of habits.

I have just been taking a walk with an American friend, who is well versed in political matters, and have enjoyed much interesting conversation upon the state of parties here. The impression which has been produced upon my mind by what I have been able hitherto to hear and see is, that in consequence of all men (almost 51 without exception) being agreed upon the great principles of government, there is no broad line of demarcation that can be drawn, as in England, between parties: those who agree upon one question differ upon another equally important (or unimportant); and it is impossible to trace, on either side, any great distinctive principles, forming the fundamentals of their political creed. Still, names are affixed to parties even here, which, to a certain limited extent, indicate definite standards of political principle. The “Whigs” are the Aristocrats and Conservatives; the “Democrats” the Liberals; and the “Locofocos” the Radicals of America. The title of “Democratic,” however, is claimed by all; the only differences which they will acknowledge are those which regard the mode in which certain admitted principles are to be applied in particular circumstances, or the *persons* to whom the administration of affairs is to be committed. This state of things at first sight appears likely to be exceedingly advantageous to a country, and to produce unity of action, harmony of feeling, and a general smoothness of working in the political machine: but somehow or other, it is not so. Whether it be that radical differences in tone of mind and habits of thought will always subsist, and find modes of expression, notwithstanding the trammels of received formulæ, D 2 52 or that, in a popular constitution, those who wish to rise must at all events find or make grounds

for attacking the policy of men whose fall is necessary to their ambition, certain it is that in no country is party feeling carried to a greater extent than here. The same thing took place in England in the middle of the last century; almost every body was whig in politics, and latitudinarian in religion; the theories of Locke and Hoadly reigned undisputed; and even such men as Burke (pervaded and imbued, as he was, with Tory *feeling* in every pore and fibre) found themselves carried away with the stream: you could not have found ten men in parliament who would have hesitated to say that “the people are the only true and legitimate source of political power.” Yet at what period of our history do we find party contests and parliamentary campaigns more constant and more fierce? The only difference seems to be that where people have not principles to fight about they will fight about places; when they are afraid to acknowledge differences of opinion on great questions they will make stalking-horses of *little* ones: and the result of the apparent unanimity will be merely to give a smaller, lower, more personal character to the quarrels which it cannot prevent.

De Tocqueville remarks that “ *la race des 53 grands hommes en Amérique a singulièrement rapetissé depuis la révolution* ,” and traces it to the natural effect of democracy and equality in de pressing individuals while it raises the mass. Without questioning the soundness of this theory in the abstract (as I think, nevertheless, might fairly be done), I am far more inclined to attribute the fact to the calm which has prevailed in the higher regions of the political atmosphere: men's minds are not, as then, stirred by coming into contact with great and comprehensive questions, involving the consideration of first principles in morals and politics, and leading them on from particular cases to dwell upon general laws. While the lull which succeeded the accession of the House of Hanover continued, not only theology, poetry, and philosophy dwindled and sank in England, but the tone of politicians also was altered decidedly for the worse: a low, materialistic, temporizing character distinguishes the leading men of all parties (not excepting Chatham); and it would be difficult to point to any period in our history when so few noble sentiments were uttered, or lofty self-denying deeds were done. It required

such a violent earthquake as the French Revolution to break the scum that had crept over the stagnant waters, and, by agitating, to purify them. Since the complete defeat and D 3 54 annihilation of the Federalists as a party in 1801, politicians in this country have had nothing to do but settle questions about tariffs, and banks, and canals, and land-sales; and it is not surprising that the exclusive attention which has been devoted to such objects should have produced a corresponding materialistic and (merely) utilitarian tone of mind.

In the history of the world there are few phenomena more extraordinary, considering the circumstances, than the number and quality of the statesmen which the American Revolution produced. We see a set of farmers, merchants, and provincial lawyers, thrown suddenly into a position of the greatest imaginable difficulty and responsibility; without any military experience, they had to cope with the most powerful nation in the world; without any political education (or at least what would *à priori* have been called such), they had to legislate for a continent. Is it not wonderful to contemplate the result, even after making all due allowance for the many favourable circumstances of their position? That generation passed away, and its descendants have not attained to the intellectual stature of their fathers: but if another convulsion take place, resulting either in the disruption of the Union, or a fundamental change in its institutions,—if, in, short, a *dignus 55 vindice nodus* should appear, I have no doubt whatever that the “vindex” will appear also.

It is a remarkable fact that Boston, though the very centre and nurse of democratic institutions, the focus of those great “movement” powers, commercial enterprise, and manufacturing industry, and the cradle of the revolutionary war, is still the stronghold of Whiggism, *i. e.* modern Federalism, which, being translated into English, means “Conservative democracy.” How is this to be accounted for? It would be reasonable to expect that the aristocratic planters, the “privileged classes” of the South, with their old “cavalier” associations, their landed possessions, and their troops of slaves, would have constituted the natural bulwark against the inroads of democratic violence, and in the conflict of parties would have been more likely than the descendants of the old Puritan stock to advocate the cause of order and wealth and strong government. And yet the

contrary is the case. “Jeffersonian democracy” is the creed of the South, and Jeffersonian democracy grew up under the auspices of French Jacobinism. A true and consistent disciple of this school is full of theories about abstract rights, natural and inalienable, by which he overthrows all arguments drawn from prescription, or expediency, or the general good. The New Englander D 4 56 is a practical man, not a “philosopher;” he has property, and he wishes to keep it and increase it: and if you could convince him that a monarchy was the form of government under which the prosperity of the country would be best assured, he would suffer no abstract idea to prevent him from adopting it. I do not mean to say that a N ew England Whig would not assert and maintain in argument the existence of a natural right in man to political freedom; I only mean that, practically, his main objects are security for property and the maintenance of order in society, and that he wishes for as much liberty as is perfectly consistent with these, and no more. The Southron, on the contrary, who is a “philosopher,” and not a practical man, meets you at once with his *à priori* theory, and maintains, that if monarchy were ever so good and useful an institution, it would not signify; it is a violation of the natural right to self-government inherent in man, so there's an end of it. It is in vain that you accuse him of the inconsistency of the practice of negro slavery with such a theory as this; he gets rid of your argument with another theory, equally easy of assumption, and equally incapable of proof,—namely, that the negro race is naturally inferior to the whites, and therefore, that, while the latter have an inalienable right to equality and self-government, the 57 former have an inalienable right to nothing at all. There is no arguing with such an opponent.

The possession of wealth has a powerful influence in giving a conservative tone to the New-England mind; so have the habits of business which accompany it: but there is another, and a most important cause, tending to produce the same effect; I mean the traditionary religious influence, handed down from the days of the Pilgrim Fathers. I do not think the New-Englanders are now a religious people in the proper sense of the word, but their Puritan ancestors decidedly were, and they constructed their whole frame-work of society and government upon a religious principle; all political franchises were dependant

on church-membership, an ecclesiastical censorship took cognisance of every man's daily walk, and it might most emphatically be said, that Christianity was part and parcel of the law of the land. Now this state of things, though afterwards altered, could not but leave deep and permanent traces upon national character; and accordingly we find in New-England, to this day, much of that fondness for forms, that respect for observances, that gravity, sobriety, and precison of demeanour, which characterised the early settlers. I need not stop to point out how such habits of mind operate in repressing a tendency to the wilder and more extreme forms D 5 58 of the revolutionary spirit; Puritanism and Jacobinism are difficult to reconcile in practice, though springing, perhaps, from not dissimilar principles.

I have been engaged to two or three parties every night, if parties they can be called, which are really nothing but visits to a lady, who has told you that she will be “at home,” not meaning thereby that her rooms will be crowded, but literally that she will not be out, and, if you happen to be disengaged, will be glad to see you at your own hour and convenience.

One day I paid a visit to Mr. C.'s villa, about six miles from Boston: it is a great lion here, being almost the only specimen of an embellished country place in the State, upon however small a scale. It is about the calibre of, say, Lord Charlemont's villa, near Dublin, and well kept up. There is a great deal of glass, both hothouses and green-houses, an English gardener and steward, fifteen or twenty labourers continually employed, a neat farm of 120 acres, with some good imported stock, stables with twelve saddle and carriage-horses in them, *all good;* and altogether an air about it which shows that the owner has the rural out-of-door tastes and habits of an English country-gentleman, but which are almost unknown in this part of America. It is 59 worth noting, by-the-by, that the race of *resident* country-gentlemen is peculiar to the British islands; on the continent they are almost unknown as well as here. The nobles and landed proprietors everywhere but with us live in the towns, and only pay passing visits to their “terres,” where it would be considered quite an exile to remain permanently. When, therefore, Irish absenteeism (for

example) is complained of, as inducing mismanagement of estates and innumerable other evils, we should recollect that it is only when compared with England that it appears to prevail at all extensively. There are more landlords resident in Ireland (twenty to one) than there are proportionably in any part of the European continent.

It must be a great discouragement to spending money, as Mr. C. has done, in embellishing a house and demesne, that at the propietor's death it must be sold in order that the proceeds may be divided among his children; and as nobody will of course be found to give anything like value for it, the money must be considered as to a great extent thrown away. The law, or rather custom, of dividing property among children, is the very key-stone of the American system, and is felt through every part of it.

Locomotive as the Americans are, there are very D 6 60 few who have travelled over much of this continent. I never heard, for instance, of any one going to the Prairies, except for scientific purposes, or to write a book, while every year there are expeditions of buffalo-hunting Englishmen. They all go east-ward (as is indeed natural) to Europe, Asia Minor, the Holy Land, and even India and China. A lady, at whose house I was the other evening, had a Chinese servant in attendance, a very nice gentlemanly looking boy, with-dark complexion and long straight black hair, whom I took for an Indian; her husband, a China merchant, had bought him of his parents for a few dollars, and though of course he is free now, he *says* he will remain in this country permanently; he has already earned and saved five hundred dollars.

One of the most curious “lions” to which I have been introduced is a very celebrated American trotter, which his owner put into a trotting-waggon in order to let me see his performance; it fully came up to all that I had heard of Transatlantic feats in that line; indeed, I could hardly believe it was a fair trot, the pace was so tremendous: I certainly never before went so fast upon wheels. The Americans drive with a thick plain snaffle, at which they keep a strong pull; the horse leans against this, with his head well down between his shoulders, and literally “seems in running 61 to devour the way.” In the light

waggons made for racing the whole draught is often upon the reins, and you may see the horse carrying carriage and driver along at a terrific pace with the traces hanging loose. Trotting is everything with *them;* all their saddle-horses draw; and neither in draught nor the saddle (even when a woman is riding) does one ever see a canter: many of them indeed cannot canter from long training to the trot, which has become their fastest pace, so that in racing it is not considered necessary to turn when they “break” but only to pull up into a trot again. The horse which I have been speaking of has been known to “do” his mile in “two twenty-seven,” as they call it, that is, two minutes and twenty-seven seconds; and I believe there are instances of its having been done within two minutes. The “rackers,” which differ from trotters in moving the hind and fore legs of each side together, are pretty common: nothing can be more awkward or ugly than the appearance of their pace, but they are easy and pleasant to sit upon, and get over the ground as fast as an ordinary horse can gallop, while the pace is not so severe upon the legs and feet.

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LETTER XVIII. BOSTON.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY.—EXHIBITION.—THEATRE.—COPYRIGHT QUESTION.—DINNERS AT BOSTON.—ABOLITIONISM.—EFFECTS OF SLAVERY ON POLITICAL PARTIES IN AMERICA.—PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS OF BOSTON.—HOUSE OF CORRECTION FOR JUVENILE OFFENDERS.—PENITENTIARY.—A MIXED PARTY.—MR. WEBSTER.—EFFECT OF STEAM NAVIGATION UPON NAVAL WARFARE.—ADVANTAGES WHICH IT CONFERS ON ENGLAND.—FUNERAL CEREMONY FOR DR. CHANNING.—AN AMERICAN ROYALIST.—AMBITION OF AMERICANS.—EFFECT OF COMMERCIAL SPIRIT.

October.

I spent most of one day at Harvard University in Cambridge, where there was an “exhibition,” very similar in character to our speeches at Harrow, but with this difference,

that the speeches were either translations or original productions of the boys. There was, of course, much bad taste, and a boyish profusion of florid rhetoric, but on the whole the compositions were very creditable to the college. There was a Greek translation of a scene in Molière, which was particularly spirited, and I was surprised to find them so accurate in pronunciation and prosody. After the exhibition 63 I dined with the President and dons; they gave a most republican repast, but I met several agreeable people, and passed a very pleasant afternoon. I was fortunate enough to sit beside one of the most eminent of modern American statesmen, whose conversational talents are as remarkable as his political; and was much amused and interested by the paradoxes which he seemed to take pleasure in advancing, and the ingenuity with which he defended them. For instance, he undertook to prove (from the passage in Scripture where our Saviour virtually repeals the implied permission to swear which the Mosaic law gives, and says, “Swear not at all,” &c.) that temperance vows are unlawful: his argument was, that the passage in Leviticus which our Saviour refers to speaks of vows, and that it is to vows, not oaths in the popular sense, that he attaches the prohibition. Mr.—chose, I am told, to maintain this interpretation, with its consequences, at great length in a speech which he had been solicited to make at a *Temperance Society* meeting, to the most amusing consternation and wrath of those who had brought him (like Balaam) for quite a different purpose. Another of his topics yesterday consisted in an attack upon Shakspeare's Desdemona: there were several counts to his indictment, but the one upon which he insisted most energetically was, her having 64 fallen in love with a blackamoor; this, he said, was the damning spot upon her: “a woman who could be guilty of so unnatural and degrading a passion deserved Desdemona's death.” I ventured to suggest that Shakspeare's idea was to describe her love as so Platonic and purified as to disregard physical deformity; “she saw Othello's visage in his mind.” He said that was no excuse; the “sooty bosom” ought to have been insuperable.

Harvard is the largest and richest of the American universities; its library, the best in the Union, is said to contain 40,000 volumes. The board of management is in the hands of Unitarians, and public worship is performed every day by Unitarian ministers; the boys

are not compelled to attend it, but allowed to go to any place of worship they please in the town.

In the evening, after returning from Cambridge, I went to the theatre to hear Hackett, a “crack” comic actor, play Rip Van Winkle; the story was badly dramatised, but the actor very good. The house was badly filled; indeed, under any circumstances, the theatre is but little patronised in New England (unless, indeed, upon the arrival of English “stars”). The economy and police of the house seemed particularly strict and well-regulated, as is the case also throughout the town: strange to say, it is even forbidden to 65 smoke in the streets. After the play I went to an evening party at Mrs.—'s; it was full, and gay; there was dancing and a supper, and the guests did not depart until the late hour of half-past eleven. Very dissipated for Boston! I have heard scarcely any music at the Boston parties, and am told that it is not common or much cared about. I have been asking whether there is any national music to be got that I may bring home with me as a specimen, but can hear of none, except a very few common-place compilations. There are some pretty negro melodies (such as “Jim Crow,” and “It's all round my hat,” which have now “European reputations,”), but with these exceptions, all their music (like Michael Kelly's) is “imported.”

I cannot imagine anything to have a more deteriorating influence on the originality of the national mind than the system which prevails here with respect to the copyright of English works; though, on the other hand, it no doubt provides the masses with an unlimited supply of cheap information. It is, of course, impossible for a publisher to give a large sum to an American author for a copyright, while the market is supplied with the best English works at a nominal price. This appears to me sufficient to account in a great measure for the dearth of good American 66 authors; for obvious reasons intervene to make it unlikely, in the present circumstances of America, that many authors should write without pay. The worst part of the system is, that it is the trash of the day, the 3-volume novels, &c., which constitute the far greater proportion of the republications; the quantity of these bought and *imbibed* by the public is incredible, and quite sufficient to neutralise the advantage resulting from the easy access to better books. It is entirely upon these grounds

of prospective advantage to themselves, that I would press the Americans to agree to a mutual copyright law: it is absurd to talk of the “injustice” of their present proceedings: as long as we keep out the “pirated” publications from our own dominions, our authors are just as well off as the authors in any other country; they have the monopoly of their own national market, and no more. How people can have the face to ask the Americans, as a matter of right or equity, to sacrifice their natural advantages (allowing them to be advantages), and tax themselves for the benefit of our authors, is to me incomprehensible. I put out of the question the “reciprocity” of the copyright, because practically, of course, it would be almost entirely (à l'Irlandaise) “on one side.”

I have not often been asked to dine out regularly: dinner parties are rare, and quite derange 67 the economy of the house where they are given; for, instead of dining at two o'clock, with his wife and children, and returning, as is usual, to his counting-house, the Amphitryon has to alter his hour to five or six, so as to get business over first. Ladies never dine out at Boston, but the lady of the house takes the head of her table, and sits alone among her male guests. The dinners are much of the same kind as would be given in houses of a similar calibre at home, except that the wine is better, and the attendance, and perhaps the cookery, worse. Sometimes there are a great number of courses, involving an unpleasant super-fluity of heavy meat; but this is only on great occasions.

Last night I met at dinner a New York gentle, man of high station, who is considered as the leader of the Abolitionist party, and we had much interesting discourse about slavery. I had no idea of the strength of feeling which exists upon this subject in New England; the number of those who even go to the length of advocating a dissolution of the Union upon this ground is considerable, and among the higher class of Whigs I have hardly met one man who does not express himself upon the subject more strongly than people are accustomed to do in England. They do not, as I think, however, put their objections to it upon 68 tenable grounds, for they invariably attack slavery, not because it leads to innumerable bad consequences, but because it is *à priori* unjust and inadmissible; they say (and it is easy for them to say it); no matter what may be the result, absolute,

unconditional abolition is necessary—“ *fiat justitia, ruat cœlum.* ” Now I see no sufficient grounds by which this line of argument can be supported: I have no faith in theories about abstract rights, based upon an alleged innate consciousness of their existence: the universal, or all but universal, testimony of mankind may afford a sufficient proof that they are a part of original revelation (made either directly or through the medium of the moral sense), as is the case with respect to the rights of parents over children, and probably, in some slight degree, with respect to a right of property* , and a few others; but nothing short of

* Upon the passage in the text a friend suggests, that it is a question, “whether, as to this (right of property), it can be carried beyond the fact of an appropriation of a thing not before appropriated, which of course must throw the *onus probandi* not upon the party in possession, but upon the party interfering? If so, there can scarcely be an inherent right, for the notion does not arise till something extrinsic has been brought into an accidental contact with the person, and then it is rather a negative and external than a positive or intrinsic notion.

“It rather means that the *status quo* cannot be disturbed by another without wrong, than that the thing appropriated has been really annexed to the person of the proprietor.”

69 a very large induction will suffice; and in the case of slavery I apprehend the weight of evidence would be very much the other way. Scripture, too, is silent on the subject, or rather indeed recognises and countenances the institution, by directing slaves, not to rebel or to run away, as a modern abolitionist would do, but to “obey their masters according to the flesh,” and to “abide in the calling wherewith they are called* ;” so that, really, except upon the ground of comparative expediency (I mean expediency of course in a moral and religious as well as a material sense), it is difficult to understand how the abolition theory is to be supported at all. As an *argumentum ad hominem* , it is very well to attack the Southerns with their inconsistency in affirming the doctrine of abstract rights when it suits their purpose, and denying them when it does not; with their mutilation of the celebrated

proposition which begins the declaration of independence (“All men are by nature free and equal”), and with the necessary anomalies which result from the combination of

* Scripture, also, which is still more to the purpose, gives certain directions to Christian masters, as such, concerning the treatment of their slaves, which clearly recognise the continuance of the relation as possible with out a breach of Christian duty. The masters are not directed to emancipate, but to “forbear threatening,” &c. Eph. vi. 9.; and see 1 Tim. vi. 2.

70 ultra-democratic theories with ultra-aristocratic practice; but to those who impugn both the abolitionist and the natural-freedom-and-equality theory, the “northern” tone of declamation against slavery appears singularly weak and unconvincing.

The mobs in the northern states are very much divided upon this subject, but the majority (including all the Irish) are in most places anti-abolitionist, entirely from hatred to the blacks, and fear lest abolition in the South might be followed by a large immigration of negroes to the North, and a corresponding reduction of wages. Even at a meeting in this city (where abolition is stronger than any where else), which was held last Sunday, such a tremendous uproar of indignation and hostility was raised when a negro was brought forward to address the assembly, that they were compelled to break up in confusion. Still, the number of abolitionists increases, and each year a larger proportion of votes is recorded for the “abolition” candidate, who is invariably set up. At the election of representatives for Massachusetts, now going on, there is a black ticket distributor (an electioneering agent, such as with us brings up tallies to the poll), a thing unknown hitherto; and it is hardly possible even now for a master to arrest his runaway slave when he gets into one of the New England states, though the 71 constitution enjoins the authorities to assist in his capture. An instance happened here only the other day, when so much indignation was excited by the fact of a master carrying off a slave in handcuffs, that it was on the point of producing a serious disturbance and a rescue in the streets; it was

only prevented by some philanthropic people who raised a subscription, and purchased the slave from the owner, who, I dare say, was content with a low price.

The ill-feeling which this subject engenders in the North is very great, and increasing (though I have no idea, as some have, that it is likely to lead to an early dissolution of the Union), not only among those fanatics who cry, “Go out from among slaveholders, and be separate, that ye be not partakers of their plagues,” but also among the Whig politicians, led by Mr. Adams. They perceive that the North has less than her just share of influence in the administration of affairs, and they attribute it to the bond of union which slavery constitutes among the slave-holding states. The latter make a compromise with the ultra-democratic party in the North, who, to secure the Southern support in their radicalism, are in return generally content to advocate slavery and other Southern interests. An anti-slavery minority, on the other hand, in the South is unknown; they 72 present an unbroken front, cemented by the feeling of strong personal interest, and thus are almost always enabled to carry their point when the two sections come into collision.*

* For instance, when the question arose as to whether Missouri should be admitted as a slave-holding state, and in the case of the district of Columbia, from which the Northerns wish to remove slavery, and others.

All that the North can do on such occasions is to hold out *in terrorem* (what very few would like to see realised) the threat of a dissolution of the Union in case slave-holding influence be increased; such an event, injurious as it would be to both parties, would be infinitely more so to the South, for many reasons: the conviction alone that it would be impossible for them to maintain slavery against the open and unchecked countenance and support, which would then be given by the Northerns to the slaves, is sufficient to make them dread the idea. Passion, however, not reason, sways them very much (and very naturally, considering the utterly unjustifiable proceedings of English and American abolitionists) upon this subject, and there is no knowing to what lengths some violent provocation might not induce them to go.

The more the abolitionists exert themselves to disseminate their principles, the farther the “Southrons” commit themselves in a contrary direction. 73 Mr. Calhoun, who may be called the head and representative of the slave-holders, and who will be one of the “first favourites” for the next presidency, has gone the length of saying lately that he considered slavery as a “glorious institution, the corner-stone of a free and democratic government, and that he hoped and prayed it might endure for ever.” Now this sentiment (countenanced as it apparently is by some unguarded expressions* made use of by Burke, in his speech upon American conciliation, which are, of course, everlastingly quoted by slave-holders) would not have been ventured upon twenty years ago; and there was even a disposition about that time to relax the severity of the laws with respect to slaves: but now they are strictly enforced, particularly those relating to instruction; so that probably in a few years there will be hardly a slave able to read or write. This is obviously caused by the persevering dissemination of abolitionist pamphlets, some of which contain extremely dangerous doctrines; nor do I at all wonder at the precautions which they produce. VOL. II E

* These expressions after all convey only a statement of the fact, that slave-holders are the greatest sticklers for liberty, or, in other words, that they only wish to apply the levelling principle to those above them, and by no means a justification of it.

74 The “Southrons” are now so strong and so violent, even in the senate, that they were *within one* of negativing the appointment of Mr. Everett to the English embassy, avowedly on the ground of his having expressed himself strongly at some public meeting on the subject of slavery. If they had carried their point, it would have been an affirmation of the principle that abolitionist sentiments constitute *per se* a disqualification for office; so that you may imagine how small is their chance of prevailing in the councils of the Union. Mr. Preston of Carolina said the other day in Congress, “If we catch an abolitionist in South Carolina we'll hang him.” And nobody got up to rebuke or answer him. The abolitionists cannot even get their anti-slavery petitions read: a standing order of the house declares that they are to be laid at once upon the table. It is considered a question with which the

Federal legislature have nothing to do, and of which even to approach the consideration is an infringement on “state rights.”

I must repeat that, considering the ground which has been taken, and the means which have been employed by the abolitionists, I neither wonder at nor blame the jealousy and soreness felt by the South upon this subject: it is with them a question, not simply of property, but of 75 life and death. If the doctrines and advice of the northern abolitionists be good and true, slaves have a right to rebel, to take their masters' property, and even to cut their throats, if necessary, for the purpose of attaining to freedom: they are wrongfully detained, have a right to freedom, and need only ascertain the practicability and expediency of insurrection in order to justify it. I say, that, where such doctrines are preached, the slave-holders have a right to take care that they shall not reach the ears of those whom they may influence (unless a still greater evil be likely to follow from the measures which such a course necessitates), and at any rate to insure the impracticability of successful insurrection. In the meanwhile immense numbers of slaves escape, the abolitionists keeping regular stations along the whole line from Virginia to Canada, for the purpose of sheltering and forwarding them. Mr.—tells me he has had thirty in his house at New York at once. If I go to the Southern States, I suppose I shall hear the other side of the question, and see something of the condition of the slaves. Here I am looked upon as very heterodox upon this subject.

On the 20th, Dr. H. took me to see the principal public institutions of the city, such as the Lunatic Asylum, the House of Correction, and E 2 76 an establishment similar to that which we have at Parkhurst, namely, a house for the confinement and reformation of juvenile offenders. Boys under sixteen, condemned for small offences, instead of being sent to the common prison, are sent to this institution, where they are kept in confinement, subjected to discipline, educated, and finally, if well-behaved, apprenticed to trades. I was much pleased with this institution: some of the inmates are little more than infants, and very few above thirteen or fourteen years of age; and certainly it gives them a better chance than they could have under another system. With respect to the

other places, there was nothing very remarkable except the excellent management, order, cleanliness, and discipline every where maintained. “Institutions” (in the technical sense) are certainly the strong point of the Americans. I remember being told by an American gentleman, that there were especially three branches of administrative science which they believed themselves to have brought to perfection in New England; namely, the management of common schools, of lunatic asylums, and gaols. The punishment at the House of Correction is a *shower-bath!* The offender is placed in a very narrow box, with a collar round his neck, and three or four barrels of ice-cold water are poured over him in succession. They tell me it 77 cows and subdues the most sturdy sinners. The danger of all the systems pursued here is that of making the places of punishment too comfortable, so as to diminish their efficacy in deterring from crime. The reformation of the criminal is considered (often avowedly) in the first place; the interests of society in the second. Upon my saying so to one of the superintendents, he agreed with me, and observed, that many who came there had been in prison a dozen times, and did not seem to mind it in the least. Much depends on the state of society which you have to deal with outside: the punishment of being confined and deprived of the power of independent action for a considerable time is much heavier in this country than it would be in Europe; and, under any circumstances, the order, silence, and regular labour to which they are condemned, is, I have no doubt, more irksome and revolting than we generally imagine to turbulent and ill-regulated minds.

On the same day I dined with Mr. Grattan, and met the Bishop of Newfoundland, Captain Elliott, of Her Majesty's frigate Spartan, Commodore Nicholson, who commands the American flag-ship here, M. Calderon de la Barca, the late Spanish minister at Mexico, and Madame Calderon, his wife, who is of a Scotch family settled E 3 78 at Boston.* I spent a very pleasant evening, as you may suppose. It would have been difficult to collect a patty of individuals who had seen more of the world in all its aspects and varieties; and most of them were well qualified to turn their experience to account. The bishop has stopped at Boston on his way from his summer diocese, Newfoundland, to his winter one, Bermuda. The government provides him with a ship of war to make his annual passages

in; so the Spartan is here in attendance. (I was a good deal amused by the observation made to me, when this was mentioned by a young American acquaintance the other day, “I wish I were a bishop, *to have the use of a frigate!* ”) Much surprise is expressed by the Americans at Captain Elliott's youth (to be in command of a crack frigate); but nothing can exceed their admiration of the Spartan, and of the order and discipline of her crew. “It sounds odd,” they say, “but it seems to work well.”

* Madame Calderon has since written a very clever and amusing book upon Mexico; a task, indeed, for which she possesses singular qualifications.

The bishop will stay, I believe, to assist at the consecration of a new bishop of Massachusetts; and some of the officers are going to take the opportunity of making a run to Niagara by the railroad.

79

After dinner I went to a party, where I met Mr. Webster, whom I had long been anxious to see. I need not say how very far he is the first man of the day in America; indeed, in strength of understanding, he is perhaps unsurpassed by his contemporaries any where. His powers of memory and calculation, and his talents for argument and debate, are such, that no one of his countrymen ventures to enter the lists with him face to face, either in public or private. The mingled admiration and terror with which he is regarded are very extraordinary: just now he holds a curious and anomalous position, having adhered to the President after the latter's rupture with the Whigs, and consequently drawn down upon himself part of the odium which attaches to John Tyler's name. Still it is only in whispers and half-expressed doubts that people venture to blame him; and when he stood up the other day at a public meeting of the Boston Whigs, and justified his conduct, though I am told at least three-fourths of his audience differed from him, and disapproved of his conduct, not an individual ventured to express dissent. He seems, however, to be more feared than loved; and, though the champion, is by no means the idol of his party. Henry Clay, the Whig candidate for the next presidency, though immeasurably inferior

in point of intellectual endowments, E 4 80 has quite taken the wind out of his sails by the popularity of his manner, his talent for mob oratory, and, above all, his real good-nature and amiability, and the personal friendships which these qualities procure for him. Mr. Webster is perhaps, both from disposition and conviction, the most conservative of American statesmen. When in England he sympathised and lived almost entirely with the “Carlton” party, and could not bear our Whigs: here, however, strong as he is, he is compelled to trim his sails to the “popular breeze,” at least to a very considerable extent. For instance, he is compelled by circumstances (for I cannot think, considering his great capacity, and particularly after reading his admirable speeches upon the tariff question in 1825, that his unbiassed convictions are on their side) to advocate the protective policy of the New-England manufacturers. A considerable free-trade party has always existed at Boston, notwithstanding the amount of capital invested in the manufactures which require protection: it consists not only of the ultra-democrats, who are for “free-everything,” but of the shipping interest, who, of course, suffer by all restrictions. The farmers in New England do not seem to wish for a change; they do not think they could compete in an unrestricted trade with the more productive southern 81 and western States; and they calculate, perhaps wisely, that their best chance lies in the hotbed prosperity of the manufacturing towns at their doors. Free trade is the watch-word of the democratic party, even in Massachusetts: and though, of course, Mr. Webster cannot, consistently with his political connexions, exhibit any appearance of favour to it just now, there seems to be little doubt that his own prepossessions and tendencies lie in that direction, and that his influence would be used in favour at least of a commercial treaty with England.

In the course of conversation the other day with Mr.—, one of the boundary commissioners employed in the late negotiations, he said that, considering the state of feeling which existed in America towards England when Lord Ashburton came over, he was convinced that no two individuals but himself and Mr. Webster could have brought it to a successful termination. From what I have seen and heard elsewhere, I am inclined to think this very probable. There can be no doubt that among the masses a very general feeling of hostility,

did prevail, and does so still, though mitigated: they fully participate in the jealousy of English power and ambition, which seems to be the monomania of continental Europe; and even now, though they cannot but think the E 5 82 treaty a sufficiently favourable one for them, they can hardly be brought to confess that they are satisfied, nor is there any symptom of general rejoicing at it. And yet a war, which would be injurious to England, would be ruinous to America: it must be altogether a naval war; and they have a most inadequate navy: the principal, indeed decisive agent, must be steam; and they have no steamers, nor money to build and man them. So that, putting out of the question the weak point presented by the peculiar position of the slave states, the war would in all probability be decided by the annihilation of American commerce.

The introduction of steam has immensely increased the naval power of England. As long as her fleets are so vastly superior to those of any other nation, every increase in the regularity and certainty with which that superiority can be made to bear upon the desired point must tell in her favour: the more *chances* enter into the game, the better for the weaker party. For example, at any time during the period of the last threatened invasion of England a storm might have swept the Channel of our ships, and before they could have been replaced or re-collected the moment for crossing would have been seized by the enemy. Now, (humanly speaking), such a result is impossible: every French port can be blockaded, 83 and every landing-place guarded, with almost as much certainty as attends the land-service; while our superiority in mechanical science, which is almost as remarkable as our naval superiority, with our command of coal and iron, and the advantage of the inexhaustible nurseries supplied by our coasting steam-service, seem fully to counterbalance the loss (if there be any) of the benefits which we formerly derived from our greater proficiency in the art of navigation. I am induced to make these remarks from observing a tendency, both abroad and at home, among careless talkers and writers, to conclude that steam will be found to have reduced the relative power of the British navy, instead of having (as I am convinced will on reflection be perceived) very considerably augmented it.

I have just been greatly amused by a paragraph which I read in the “New York Herald,” a paper of about the calibre of the “Satirist,” but which is taken in every where* , and which every body reads and abuses. There has been a kind of funeral ceremony all over the country, with orations *à la Pericles* , combined with divine service, in honour of Dr. Channing, who died E 6

* I must make an honourable exception in favour of the Astor House at New York; at least so I have since been informed, for I did not observe the absence of the paper when I was there.

84 lately, and among others the Rev. Mr. Bellows, it seems, was to preach a eulogy upon him at New York; upon which the “Herald” says, “We challenge all the other papers in the city to report and publish against us the forthcoming sermon” (which was to be in a church). “We trust Mr. Bellows is too much of *a Christian* and a gentleman to give to any competitor the unfair advantage of a previous copy; and upon this condition we appeal to a discerning public to decide upon the event.” I could not resist transcribing this, but it is only fair to say that I have no idea of supposing it to be more than an *escapade* of the editor, or that it was meant to be seriously acted upon.

One of the most remarkable, among the few Americans who think monarchical institutions desirable even for this country, is Mr.—, a literary man of considerable reputation, whose acquaintance I have had the pleasure of making, and with whom I have had much interesting and agreeable conversation. Of course I found much in his opinions and feelings with which I sympathised, but I by no means agree in the very sombre view which he takes of the state of things in America, or in his anticipation of a speedy convulsion, ending in a military despotism. Such views are the natural result of the desponding 85 temper of mind produced by living in a country and generation with which one has no sympathy, but to me I confess they appear visionary and groundless; I see no reason for apprehending for a long series of years any permanent check to the material prosperity of America. Mr.—has never been in England, though of course it is his beau ideal—the

land of his dreams. I fear if he went there he would be disappointed, so it is as well that he should continue to dwell upon the “merrie England” of his own warm imagination and kind heart.

The principal topic which he dwelt upon, and upon which I am disposed to a great extent to agree with him, was the comparative want of softness, of reverence, of humility, and of the other peculiarly Christian virtues, which the most partial observer of American character cannot but notice and deplore in his countrymen. It results perhaps as much from commercial habits as from republican institutions; and the former are necessarily produced by the physical circumstances of the country, and its position relatively to England as regards literature and language: still, democracy fosters, encourages, and developes them, and the character which they produce; the feverish activity, energy, and restlessness of disposition, generated by habits of self-government, when uncorrected, 86 explode as it were in the gambling speculations of trade: and it is very difficult for the citizen of a republic, who is practically brought to believe from his earliest youth that he is as good a judge of every theological, political, and social question as the wisest of his contemporaries, to remain contented with his lot; he must be constantly trying to rise, to make money, to thrust himself into notice: the calm, humble, habit of mind of a European labourer or domestic servant, who is satisfied to remain all his life in the situation in which he finds himself, and to do the duties of it, is not only distasteful to him, but absolutely contemptible in his eyes. There is no doubt that the wealth and resources of a country will be increased and developed under such a constant forcing system with incalculable rapidity; but *that* is not the true standard by which the system is to be tried, though our habitual want of faith makes it very difficult for us to think so. There may be traits in such a character which resemble the Aristotelian μe##[???]#u#o#, the ideal of heathen philosophy, (though even there the money-making motive would be out of place, and the activity also, o[???]#e# #[???]# μ[???]## [???]##[???]); but there are very few upon which one can fancy an apostle or a martyr of the early church to have looked with approbation, or which he would not at least have thought it necessary 87 to discipline and to check.

I am not arguing with persons who reject the authority of Scripture; but to those who do not I would fain suggest the difficulty of reconciling *the spirit* of commercial philosophy, as it is exemplified both in England and in America, with two plain scriptural precepts (taken together with the context): “Let a man be contented with that he hath;” and, “Let every man abide in the calling wherein he is called.” I do not mean to say that they may not be reconciled; I know that thousands of most conscientious and religious men are fully convinced that they do reconcile them: but I am sure that to do so is a near and a hard thing, either in argument or in practice; that it requires constant watchfulness and self-denial, and a deep sense of accountability; that ordinarily it is not attempted; and that consequently an atmosphere thoroughly pervaded with the commercial spirit is, generally speaking, (particularly when combined with democratic institutions,) unfavourable to the growth of Christian principles. As regards even temporal happiness, I am fully convinced that this “go a-head” system does not answer; always getting, never enjoying,—

“Man never *is* , but ever *to be* blest.”

This, however, is a more disputable, and infinitely less important, aspect of the question.

LETTER XIX. BOSTON.

JOURNEY TO MAINE.—COUNTRY HOUSE.—TAXATION IN AMERICA.—SCHOOL AT G——.—TOWN FARM.—BRUNSWICK.—INFLUENCE OF GERMANY UPON THE NATIONAL MIND OF AMERICA.—JOURNEY THROUGH MAINE.—RETURN TO BOSTON.

Boston, October.

Having received a hospitable invitation from a gentleman whose relations I had known in New York, and who gave me letters of introduction to him to visit him in his country-house in the State of Maine, I found myself on a beautiful bright October morning steaming up

the broad Kennebec, some 150 miles to the north-east of Boston, and by breakfast-time arrived at my destination, a large house beautifully situated, and overlooking the river. Mr.—is almost a solitary instance, in New England, of a man of large property residing entirely on his estate in the country; and in Boston I used to hear his taste in doing so spoken of as most singular and extraordinary. Independently of the pleasure which it gave me to make his acquaintance, and to see that part of 89 the country, which is comparatively little visited by travellers, you can hardly imagine the luxury which I always feel, after a long spell of rattling and ringing in hotels, and steam-boats, and railroads, in finding myself in a quiet country-house; every thing within and without appears *couleur de rose.*

There is a very pretty church in the village of G—, about a mile from hence, in which we attended service twice on Sunday. There was a wedding just before service, and the bridegroom and bride remained quietly among the congregation afterwards: it is, however, very uncommon to be married in church; there is no canon to that effect in the American church, so that it is left to private feeling and, generally speaking, marriages take place at home. There was a good congregation, both in the morning and afternoon. The clergyman's salary is 800 dollars a year, which is, I am told, about the average income of country parishes: in the towns it generally reaches 1500 or 2000, which bears, I think, a fair proportion to the remuneration of the other learned professions. Mr.—is a constant and active member of the General Convention of the “Episcopal Church,” and has supplied me with all sorts of ecclesiastical statistics. By the way, it is not a good symptom of the interest which laymen 90 in this country usually show for these matters, that I am generally met by an inquiry as to whether I am going into orders, wherever I make inquiries upon the subject, followed by a demonstration of surprise when I say that nothing is farther from my intentions. There is hardly any part of the Union where the church exercises so little influence as in New England, yet even here she is advancing.* Within the last twenty years the number of her members throughout the Union has increased four-fold, i.e. in a ratio more than double that of the general increase of population: she now reckons about 1200 clergymen, and, perhaps, 800,000 professing members; and it is remarkable that one-

third of the clergy were formerly Dissenting ministers of different denominations, and have conformed.

* In Boston all the leading men are Unitarian, a creed peculiarly acceptable to the pride and self-sufficiency of our nature, asserting as it does the independence and perfectibility of man, and denying the necessity of atonement or sanctification by supernatural influences.

A gentleman living, like my host, in the country here, has by no means the same sort of occupations that we have at home: the relation of landlord and tenant is unknown (or nearly so) in New England; a relation which, with us, though often productive of bad feeling and hostility, may, 91 on the other hand, be made the instrument of so much good: the office of justice of the peace too is merely nominal, except in the case of a few lawyers, who do all the business of the country, and derive a small emolument from the fees. People of property and education are naturally much discouraged from taking part in local or political affairs, by finding themselves utterly destitute of the influence which (according to our notions) ought to attend upon those qualifications. I have been quite surprised at the number of those whom I have met with, who have renounced all interference with public matters, and never even vote at elections. I cannot but think that they are wrong; but the feeling which actuates them is natural enough.

Mr.—'s income is derived, in a great measure, from the sale of lands, which is going on continually. The land does not, I think, bring as much, *cæteris paribus* , as land in Upper Canada; about the same, perhaps (though the comparison is difficult, and necessarily imperfect), as that in our Lower Province: wages are rather higher generally, and taxes enormously heavier, averaging (at a loose estimate) about one per cent. yearly upon the value of a man's property, real and personal. This proportion varies very much in different townships, some not devoting nearly so 92 much to public institutions, roads, schools, &c. as others. I am quite aware of the difficulty of ascertaining the comparative taxation of different countries, from the different names and forms under which it is imposed,

and still more that of discovering how it presses upon individuals in proportion to their ability: I make every allowance for the provision made out of the state funds for public communications and public instruction, and for the cheapness of subsistence consequent upon the absence of excise and the lowness of customs duties* upon articles of food; and yet I cannot but think that one-tenth of a man's income (assuming the profits of capital to be ten per cent.) is high for a country that boasts of cheap government.

* Tea and coffee pay no duty, brandy one dollar per gallon, claret only six cents, and other wines in proportion; refined sugar six cents per lb., which makes Louisiana a “tariff” state.

I find that (as, of course, was to be expected) the schools in most parts of the country are by no means comparable in excellence to those which excited my admiration at Boston and New York: very often they are not open for more than two or three months in the year (the winter months); and the teachers are, in point of qualification, a very inferior class. In G—, for instance, people 93 who can afford it always send their children to private schools; the public gratuitous instruction is so scanty and bad: it is sufficient, however, to teach the “elements,” reading, writing, and perhaps a little arithmetic; and very few are ignorant of these. I visited one of the private schools, and found a large attendance of girls and boys, all under male tuition, but in separate rooms; the course of instruction for both sexes was precisely the same, comprising Latin, Greek, French, Metaphysics, Mathematics, and other things, more than I can recollect: and the master (who seemed a particularly intelligent, well-informed man) said he saw no difference in capacity, and made no difference in management, between the two departments. Surely eight hours out of the twenty-four are too much to be devoted entirely to studies of this kind, in the case of girls, as all religious ininstruction is of course excluded, as well as the cultivation of those tastes and habits which are peculiarly feminine. Though all “peculiar religious opinions” are excluded, I found that here, as elsewhere, daily service, consisting of a chapter in the Bible, and a prayer by the master (who in this case happened to be a Unitarian), is performed.

I and all over New England the principle of the English poor-law in full force, (the principle, 94 namely, that employment a nd support are to be found for all), with some alterations in detail, which seem to me by no means improvements. In this township (G—) there is a “town farm” of 120 acres, with an almshouse on it, where the paupers live; and the system of maintaining them is this. Every year the contract for their support is put up to auction, and whoever bids lowest, if approved by the select-men (the executive officers of the township), gets it. He then enters into possession of the farm, and receives the sum for which he had stipulated. He is allowed to get as much work as he can out of the inmates, and to dispose of the profits of the farm: he is bound to receive and provide for as many paupers as the select-men choose to send to him; so that if he has calculated badly, or there happens to be that year an unusual pressure, he may lose considerably by the speculation: and he may either give out-door relief (including money in aid of wages), or take the applicants into the work-house, and employ them as he finds it cheapest, or can make his bargain with them. What enormous abuses would such a system open the way to with us! Making all due allowance for the favourable circumstances which attend the operation of poor-laws in this part of the country, (where, in fact, very few apply but those who are old, or infirm, 95 or helpless in some way or other, such as idiots and orphans,) I can hardly conceive how it goes on. Certainly the Americans may with justice lay claim to a more vigilant superintendence on the part of the public over those in office than exists elsewhere, and also (which is better) to a universal sympathy in favour of the apparently oppressed; so that, in cases of complaint, the chances are that public opinion, in nine cases out of ten, will lean to the pauper. There are now thirty-three paupers in the G— workhouse, out of a population of five thousand, and the expense is about one thousand dollars a year.

After spending four or five extremely pleasant days at G—(one of which was devoted to a chasse after woodcocks in the neighbouring forest), I started by stage for Brunswick, also in Maine, where I remained for two days, and had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with the Principal, and most of the other “Dons” of the university there. Brunswick is one

of those long straggling green and white villages which one finds continually in the midst of the American forests, and which have sprung up suddenly and with incredible rapidity, owing to the discovery of some water-power, or other natural advantage. There is a huge barn-shaped meeting-house, three great red brick barrack-like buildings, constituting 96 the college, a very tolerable hotel, and perhaps 150 or 200 houses, scattered over an immense extent of ground, and surrounded on all sides by pinewoods and sand.

The university of Brunswick at present possesses considerable reputation, in consequence of the learning and talents of its president. There is a great jealousy of universities among the people; and it is generally thought that the practice of granting state endowments to them, which has been pretty extensive, will be discontinued. Popular as their form is, they are considered by many too aristocratic, and others “see no good in Latin and Greek.” A strong tendency also exists to prefer the German university regulations to ours, that is, mere instruction to instruction joined with moral discipline, or the “professorial” to the “tutorial” system; a tendency which proceeds of course from the popular feeling in favour of visible tangible results. It is a common practice among American youths, especially when destined for a theological profession, to go through a considerable part of their preparatory studies at Halle, Berlin, and other German universities; and this must, I should think, have the worst effects upon their religious faith. The dark side of Germany is the scepticism and rationalism of its literary men; what we call strict and orthodox opinions have 97 hardly any supporters; and if the evil effect of this state of things were not counteracted by the conservative habits of the country* and nature of its institutions, and the submissive religious feelings of the more ignorant classes, it could hardly fail to be productive of the most fatal consequences to society. Here the importation of German rationalism is particularly dangerous, for none of these counteracting principles prevail; and the spread of Unitarianism, Rationalism, and Pantheism, by which New-England is now overrun, appears very alarming. I have spoken to many American students, who have lived much in Germany, upon this subject, and the impression which I have received from

their information has been invariably the same, viz. that Germany is exercising a most powerful and deleterious influence upon the higher class of minds in New-England.

* There is at this moment a strong conservative reaction in the German universities, with perhaps the exception of Heidelberg, consequent upon the democratic movement of 1830; but, as far as I can judge, there hardly appears a symptom of reaction towards a healthier religious tone, such as has undeniably taken place in France. I do not look merely to such men as to Strauss and his followers, but to their (so called) high-church school, of which Neander may be considered, I suppose, a fair specimen.

On my way from Brunswick to Boston I stopped for a night at Portland, where I delivered a letter, and went to a party. Englishmen are VOL. II. F 98 not common in Maine, yet I do not find the least disposition to stare or to intrude: every body in these provincial towns is kind and civil, and yet quite satisfied to let one alone. One exceedingly good-natured round-bellied gentleman amused me a good deal, by telling me that he was always taken for a John Bull abroad (he was a sailor), on account of his comfortable proportions and jolly demeanour. “You see,” he said, “we Americans are on the run all the time: if we could get a chance to lay by and fat up, we should come out stout too.” There is a good deal of truth in the theory; Americans “go a-head” too fast to enjoy the blessings of sound sleep and good digestion.

From Portland I travelled to Boston, 100 miles in eight hours, by railroad and stage. The railroad will soon be open the whole way, and thus the line of steam communication will be completed from one extreme of the United States to, the other, from Maine to Georgia. Well may the Americans say, when they contemplate these prodigies of physical progress, “This is a great country,—it has unbounded energies and resources.” So it has; and they have a right to say so.

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LETTER XX. BOSTON.

CATHOLIC MOVEMENT AMONG NEW ENGLAND DISSENTERS.—VIEW OF THEIR POSITION.—SECTARIANISM.—VOLUNTARY SYSTEM.—BLIND ASYLUM.—LAURA BRIDGMAN.—FOREIGN QUARTERLY.—AMERICAN PERIODICALS.—LITERARY TASTE.—AMERICAN WHIGGISM.—PRESIDENTIAL AUTHORITY.—ITS INCREASE.—THE OLD FEDERALISTS.—ABILITY OF AMERICAN STATESMEN.—LATIN SCHOOLS.—MR MANN'S SPEECH.—SCENE IN A TAVERN.—STATE OF RELIGION IN NEW ENGLAND.—PILGRIM FATHERS.—THEIR IDEAS OF TOLERATION—SOCIETY IN BOSTON.

Boston, October.

I have been much surprised and interested by the conversation of two or three congregationalist ministers, eminent for talent and piety, whom I have become acquainted with, and who have been explaining to me their position and their views. It seems that a considerable movement has taken place among them lately in the direction of Catholicity, some of them having even embraced the very highest views upon church matters, and supporting to the fullest extent the patristic theory as to the idea and constitution of the church, and the nature of the sacraments. Still they have not joined what they acknowledge to be a true branch of the F 2 100 church in this country, and justify their not doing so somewhat in the following manner. “Admitting,” they say, “the doctrine of the visible church, and the apostolic succession, and consequently the schism of which the original founders of our sect were guilty, we think that the conservative principle, which all admit in politics, may be applied to the ecclesiastical constitution also: we maintain that *quod fieri non debuit, factum valet* , that prescription has effaced, as it were, the flaw in the original deed; and that the fruits of faith and holiness which have been produced in many of the unauthorised sects are an evidence that it has pleased God to vouchsafe to them his grace, though they had deprived themselves of its ordinary instruments. Under these circumstances, though we acknowledge, and indeed earnestly maintain, the duty of sectarians, *as a body* , to reunite themselves to the church, we conceive that

the primary obligations of *each individual* are to the ‘connexion’ in which he finds himself; and that while he is to endeavour earnestly in his place to bring about the desired re-union, yet he is not justified in straggling, as it were, individually, from his appointed place in the economy of Providence.” These opinions have been by no means suppressed or concealed by those who hold them; and though the result has of course been to draw 101 down upon them a considerable amount of indignation and opposition, still it has not been so great as one would have expected: no general movement to exclude and put them down has taken place in their communion; and as long as this is the case, they still continue to hope (against hope as I think) that the influence which they have may be made useful in inclining their brethren to a recognition and reparation of their original error. It is now under contemplation to promulgate, by means of the press, these opinions, which they have hitherto only maintained in sermons, addresses, and conversation. They propose to inculcate the Catholic doctrines of the church and sacraments, without alluding at all to the bearing of those doctrines on their own position, but leaving each man to draw his conclusions after considering the abstract question.

This movement is not confined to the “orthodox Dissenters:” strange as it may seem, symptoms of the same kind have made their appearance even among the Unitarians. I have just read an article in the “Boston Quarterly Review,” (a publication combining, hitherto, ultra-democratic politics with a Unitarian theology, which verged upon Pantheism,) in which the writer, Mr. Brownson, expresses the most extreme and “ultramontane” opinions upon the constitution and authority of F 3 102 the church which I have ever seen anywhere; far beyond anything which a conscientious member of the Church of England could, in my opinion, consistently subscribe to: and I have also seen a letter from a very well-known and eminent Unitarian, in which he expresses approbation and sympathy for, though not coincidence of opinion with, writings of a similar nature. I rather suspect, however, that these two last-named individuals take to a great extent the same view of these matters which seems to be adopted by Lamennais, Lamartine, and others of the modern French and German schools; a view which reconciles (or attempts to

reconcile) an ultra Catholic tone and feeling with Pantheistic doctrines, and considers the church system as only one of many “successive developments” of the universal spirit, all equally true, but equally partial and transient.

There is no doctrine more completely misunderstood and perverted by all the sects in this country than that respecting Baptism. Nearly four-fifths of the children and two-thirds of the male population are unbaptized, the prevailing theory being, that the signs of regeneration, consisting in certain mental “experiences,” as they term them, should precede the rite, which they do not even then consider necessary; all that is important in effecting justification having, according 103 to their principles, already taken place. The Baptists are the most numerous sect in this country by far; and much of the practice I have just mentioned is derived from their doctrines: maintaining that the “Bible alone” is a sufficient rule of faith and practice, they reject Infant Baptism, as a large portion of them (called the Seventh-day Baptists) do the observance of Sunday, observing Saturday instead, upon the ground that there is no direct authority for either in the New Testament. The Congregationalists admit both in theory, but disregard the former very generally in practice; while the Unitarians and Universalists (the latter of whom maintain the universal salvation of mankind to the full extent of professed Antinomianism), of course, do not insist on forms of any kind: every now and then, however, a “revival” takes place (as it is called), and all the sects emulously get up religious excitement in every possible way, by camp-meetings, sermons, &c., which are followed by a general rush for Baptism, and frequent participation in the Lord's Supper; in a few weeks the excitement subsides, and things go on as before. I am sorry to hear that many of the “Episcopalian” clergy countenance these irregular and fanatical practices, for fear of losing their congregations, and hold conventicles, with extempore prayer, and all the other stimulants in vogue. F 4

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The effect of the voluntary system upon the manner in which the clergy perform their duties is not to be looked for chiefly in a tendency to abstain from enforcing strictness of life, or from preaching what are commonly called unwelcome truths about sin and

repentance, or even from rebuking individual delinquents; as in all these things public opinion goes along with and supports the minister: the more rigid his requirements, and the more uncompromising his tone, the more will his flock follow and applaud him. A man may therefore take what is commonly called a high tone in matters of morality, with the most complete impunity as regards his worldly interests, while he may shrink from opposing the current of popular opinion where it is strongly and generally expressed: as, for instance, where plausible motives of expediency have induced irregular and self-chosen methods of pursuing what are admitted to be good ends. Of this nature are the "revivals," of which I have just spoken; and under the same category come all those unregulated societies with which New England is absolutely rife:—abolition societies, advocating in many cases the grossly unscriptural principle that a slave may use force to obtain his freedom; non-resistance societies, which deny the lawfulness of assisting the civil and military executive against foreign or 105 domestic enemies; and many others of a similar nature. Now I have reason to believe that few clergymen have, not merely opposed, but refused to join in advocating the objects of these societies with men whose conduct and expressions they cannot but condemn, where the feeling in favour of them has extensively pervaded their districts; while those who have opposed them have been obliged, in most cases, to resign. Again: I cannot conceive an American clergyman preaching the unlawfulness (on religious grounds) of the American Revolution (of course I am not speaking of any theory which might be considered subversive of the obligation to obey the government as at present constituted), and the duty of absolute submission to "the powers that be." I am not condemning the voluntary system; and indeed I may be wrong in supposing that men would shrink from expressing even such unpopular opinions as these if conscientiously convinced of their truth: I am only remarking that it is to such points as these that we ought to direct our attention in discussing the comparative advantages and evils of the system, and not, as is generally done, simply to the (so-called) moral tone of the preacher. There is no doubt that, as far as such questions present a religious aspect (which they undoubtedly do), he ought not to hesitate to express F 5 106

his sentiments upon them: and the argument of those who disapprove of the voluntary system is, that it tends to influence him unduly in this particular.

Yesterday morning I went to visit the Blind Asylum, and to see Laura Bridgman, a most singular and interesting child, who has been from her infancy deaf, dumb, and blind. She is now twelve years old; and, having been for four years under the care of Dr. Howe (the physician who has the superintendence of the establishment), is probably in mind about upon a par with an ordinary child of six. I will bring you the report containing an account of her case; which is, I believe, the first successful attempt to instruct a person *without senses* , except that of touch (for she cannot smell, and her organ of taste is very imperfect).* Her countenance is full of intelligence, her smile particularly sweet, and her head (phrenologically) excellent. She sat knitting beside Dr. Howe, talking constantly to him by feeling his hands, laughing all the time, and appearing to be in the highest spirits. Indeed, he told me that her animal spirits, being debarred

* In one of the chapters upon Boston, in Mr. Dickens's “American Notes,” there is so full a description of this extraordinary child, and of the circumstances connected with her education, as to make any further account superfluous. Mine was, however, so short, that I have left it untouched.

107 from the usual safety-valves, namely, observation and attention, by means of seeing and hearing, sometimes assume the character of nervous excitement; and it is not till after being tamed by exercise and fatigue that she can be brought to remain perfectly quiet and composed. She was perpetually in motion, talking to herself (with her fingers), or moving about the room, or writing on ruled paper which was set before her; and then for a minute or two knitting assiduously. It requires a good deal of reflection to “realise” fully the condition of a human being cut off from all the ordinary channels of communication, and to appreciate the astonishing difficulty of establishing a new one. Dr. Howe may well be proud of his unprecedented success.

After leaving the “Asylum,” I went to the reading-room to see an article in the “Foreign Quarterly” on the American Press, which has made a great noise, and is universally attributed to Mr. Dickens. It is forcibly and severely written, but has a tendency to degenerate in many places into the faults which it condemns. The best periodical writing in America is to be found in the Reviews, of which several (as, for instance, the New York and North American) would in any country be considered as ably conducted. There is an immense demand, too, for our periodicals, F 6 108 which are all reprinted here in a comparatively cheap form, and read, I think, more eagerly than at home. It is just the sort of reading which the Americans like; it does not require much time or thought; it is highly spiced and piquant; and enables people who have not leisure or inclination for profound study to keep up, to a certain extent, with the thought and literature of the day. The favourite author with the mass of Americans is, beyond all question, Dickens; with the “literary circles” I should say Macaulay and Carlyle, whose “Miscellanies” are published (as are Scott's, Wilson's, &c.) in separate volumes. Probably this preference is the result, not so much of the analogy between the nature of their opinions and those of the majority here, as of the striking and brilliant character of their styles. The American reading public requires to be perpetually startled, as it were, by something salient and uncommon either in the phraseology or turn of thought, (a taste, by-the-by, which has evidently produced the extraordinary supply of quaint, humorous, and pregnant American slang, with which we are now becoming so familiar): in poetry the melody must be obvious; in prose the periods rounded and the ornaments excessive. Wordsworth's theories about poetical diction find no acceptance here; nor do his works, or those of 109 our older and simpler poets, appear to be much admired or read. I have even a suspicion (though no one would avow such a heresy) that Bulwer is preferred to Scott.

The connection between the character of literature and the state of society in different countries is general and obvious. In Germany, for instance, where there exists a large class of professional students, men of high cultivation and profound thought, whose critical opinions set the tone and fashion to the mass of readers, the character of the

national literature is almost entirely of a profound and esoteric kind. In England, where the “reading public” comprises various classes, whose habits of life and of thought are not only different but independent, our literature (like every thing else) bears a mixed and double character: Wordsworth and Shelley find readers and imitators, as well as Scott and Byron; and Coleridge is almost as extensively read as Cobbett. In America, again, the theory apparently acted upon is, that everything ought to be intelligible to every body, or at least suit every body's taste; no reputation seems to be attainable in any other way,—either the style or the sense must be “saillant” and obvious.

In the evening I was introduced to, and spent a couple of hours in conversation with, Mr. B., a 110 gentleman of considerable literary and political reputation, and leader of the Van Buren party in New England. I was amused to find that upon many subjects, such as slavery and free trade, for instance, we came to much the same conclusions (practically), though by totally different roads, as you may suppose; for he is a “philosophical democrat,” and I am very much the reverse. Mr. B. says, (and, I am sure, truly,) that the late apparent reaction (in the presidential election) in favour of the Whigs was the result, in the first place, of the prevailing commercial distress, which was of course attributed to the legislative policy of the democrats, who happened to be in power at the moment, but, still more, of the personal popularity of General Harrison. It was, he says, an eddy in the river, and cannot be considered as exhibiting any symptom of a permanent check to the general tendency of the national mind towards (what we should call) Radicalism. The Whigs assumed the watchwords and colours, and used the electioneering devices, of the democratic party; General Harrison was put forward as the “man of the people,” and described as coming from his plough to the hustings; pictures of him in his shirt-sleeves, with a tumbler of cider beside him, and his log-cabin in the back-ground, were universally circulated: and it was this (with recollections 111 of his military services) which procured his success. The fact is, that they are all really democrats, and that the subjects of difference between Whigs and Locofocos are entirely of a local and personal kind, and have no reference at all to great principles of government. There is a greater anxiety for

the preservation of order and tranquillity felt by the Whigs than by their opponents, as being, generally speaking, a more “substantial” class of men; and they are not so much disposed to consider the state of things here as realising the Platonic “idea” of a perfect republic; they are more cautious, but less consistent: for I am perfectly convinced that those who set out with the dogma, that “the people are the only true and legitimate source of political power,” may be led by a strict logical sequence to admit the necessity of the most complete and unmixed ochlocracy.

It is a remarkable fact, that, while the democratic principle is deepening and extending itself every year in this country, the presidential authority is increasing along with it, and in an equal ratio; and that the two powers, far from appearing antagonist, seem to depend upon and support each other. Ever since the revolution the struggle for power has been between the classes which represent property (including the capitalists, lawyers, and 112 official people,) and the “masses,” or mob. General Jackson's first election signalised the triumph of the latter party; and from that time the president has been emphatically their creature, returned directly by their individual suffrages, and representing, or at least professing to represent, their interests: hence it follows that in every violent exercise of power, in every collision with congress, or with the monied or judicial interests, the presidents have always had the populace with them. General Jackson used to say, that he only required a large majority in the senate to declare against any particular measure to be sure of carrying it: and I really believe that Van Buren's election was attributable in a great measure to the refusal by that body to confirm his nomination to the English embassy. May it not be just possible that at some future period there may follow from this alliance a result similar to that which took place in Western Europe, where the monarchs undoubtedly possessed themselves of the great power which they enjoyed after the decline of the feudal system, by appearing as the patrons of the people against the tyranny of the barons, and making use of the former to break the power of the latter? It is commonly said that if General Jackson had been twenty years younger, in 1836, he would have “run” for a third re-election, which 113 would have been virtually a presidency

for life, and that he would probably have succeeded. I cannot, however, agree with those who think so. If their speculations be well founded, America was within a hair's breadth of ceasing to be a republic: and I see no signs of her being ripe for such a revolution. I am sure that any plausible suggestion of permanent, independent authority being aimed at, would ruin the accused party: it is because the people feel their chief magistrate to be their instrument and their plaything, that he is supported and applauded. I know that extremes meet; that mob-government has always led to despotism: but it has been through the medium of causes which do not at present exist in America. In the first place, the people in former cases have neither been educated in, and thoroughly possessed by, democratic theories, nor have they acquired the habits of self-government, which are universal here: consequently, when they found themselves in possession of power, they did not know what to do with it; and their minds being familiarised with the idea of a strong government, they naturally looked to it as the only refuge from anarchy. In the second place, there is now no want of a strong government; there is, *on the whole* , no such prevalence of crime, no such insecurity of property, as to outweigh (what 114 all Americans believe to be) the evils of monarchical power. On the whole, therefore, speculations upon the analogy which may possibly appear between the policy of Louis XI., and that of some future President of the United States, have no legitimate bearing upon the present state of things. It is a curious anomaly, nevertheless, this co-existence of immense influence, power, and patronage, in the hands of one man, (exercised, too, in the most unreserved and even capricious manner,) with his complete prostration at the end of four years under the feet of the populace. Every year the value of the prize, and consequently the excitement which the contest for it produces, increases with the growth of the country and the augmentation in the number of offices at the president's disposal. Every officer in every department loses his place, as a matter of course, if the opposite party succeed in electing their president; and when one recollects that there are three or four thousand postmasterships alone, and other similar places in proportion, it is no wonder that the country is in a perpetual turmoil, with an eye to the great event.

With reference to the president's position, and the possibility of its exercising at some future time an influence unfavourable to the permanence of republican institutions, I am tempted to 115 transcribe an interesting passage (quoted in “Southey's Colloquies”) out of an American author of reputation, which bears upon the subject. “Affection,” says Dr. Dwight, “has for its proper object intelligent beings. The fewer these are, and the longer they are regarded with affection, the more intense and riveted the affection becomes. For the entire efficacy of this affection we must look to a monarchy, army, or navy. The ruler here, being a single object, concentrates the whole regard of the mind; and if an amiable and worthy man, faithfully and wisely discharging the duties of his office, may exercise an influence, over those whom he governs, next to magical. Of the benefits to which this powerful principle gives birth, free governments ought, in every safe way, to avail themselves. A doctrine, a constitution, or even an abstract term, may serve as a watchword of party, a torch of enthusiasm, or an idol of occasional ardour. But there is no permanent earthly object of affection except *man;* and without such affection there is reason to fear that no free government can long exist in safety and peace.” (Travels, &c. vol. i. p. 262.) I find Dr. Franklin, in the course of the debates in the Convention of 1787, recognising the existence and strength of this tendency in the human mind; and he adduces it as a reason for guarding against 116 all chance of its finding an object for itself in the establishment of monarchy. Those who look upon the matter from the same point of view as I do, will of course arrive at a different conclusion from Dr. Franklin's upon the same premises; they will consider the tendency a legitimate one, and will found an argument against the American system upon the fact, that under that system it cannot be satisfied.

I have seen a good deal of some of the old “Federalists,” a party which, though a very small minority now in point of numbers, still comprises some of the most wealthy and intelligent men in the country. Though many of them now express ultra-conservative sentiments, I must confess that I feel but little sympathy for their fate as a political party. From the beginning they were in a false position; and eminent as were the talents of their

leaders, it was soon apparent that they shrunk from adopting the conclusions to which their own premisses legitimately led, and that bolder politicians and more consistent reasoners were required to satisfy the tendencies which they had created or encouraged. The democratic party “threw them over” (just as Robespierre and the Mountain did the Girondins in 1792), because its policy was felt to be more in accordance with the spirit of their common principles. It is rather 117 amusing now to hear the depreciating tone in which these gentlemen speak of democratic institutions, and their gloomy anticipations for the future. One of them said to me, last night, “If you consider the test of a good constitution to be its tendency to call out and enlist the greatest possible amount of ability and virtue in the public service, ours totally fails; all offices, even the judicial, are made in the most barefaced manner the rewards of political partizanship, and the most abject slavery to the popular fancy is the only road to influence or power. Can you wonder that under such circumstances many of us consider the post of honour to be a private station?”* It is not, however, the case that the American public service is unsupplied with officers, who are at least efficient, so far as I can judge from those departments whose administration I have had the means of observing; or if there be any deficiency in this respect, it is compensated by the greater vigilance

* It may not be uninteresting to quote here some remarks made by Sismondi, whose opinions on the whole were decidedly republican, upon federal governments. He says, “The system of confederate republics united under one federal head has been defined, not unaptly, the feudal system applied to democracy,—the same broils, the same anarchy, the same loose dependance upon a common head, to whom they render a sort of vain homage, but whom they rarely obey; the same selfishness and want of public spirit.”—*Travels in Switzerland*, vol. ii. p. 545.

118 with which they are watched and criticised by the public;—nor can I see, in looking through their history, any signs of the interests of the federal government being on the whole inadequately represented by its public servants: on the contrary, both its foreign and domestic policy appears to exhibit prudence and vigour in a very remarkable degree, and

to have been proportionately successful. I certainly think there are at present symptoms of degeneracy among their public men, and that the average of philosophy and eloquence exhibited in Congress is very decidedly below what it ought to be: but I am inclined to account for this, as I said before, by the circumstances of the times, which are not such as to call out and develope man's energies, rather than to any innate defect in the constitution.

Nor, even if it were otherwise, do I at all consider, with my federalist friend, that the test of a good constitution is, “its employing the greatest amount of ability and virtue in the public service.” That this should be done, is doubtless very desirable; but it is not, I think, the primary object of laws and institutions: that object should be the formation of a national character; and it is by the manner in which they effect this that I would chiefly test them. If the probability of having the most efficient executive is alone to be looked 119 to, I can conceive no state of things more desirable than that which leaves it in the hands of an arbitrary irresponsible monarch. All political writers admit this to be the case; and yet there is no doubt that almost all the instances in which great things have been done with small means occur in the history of republics. The reason of this obviously is, that the energetic character which the republican form of government produces compensates for the defective machinery of its executive. It is not by pointing to such defectiveness that popular institutions are to be successfully attacked,—all history confutes the man who does so: it is by showing (if it can be shown) that the habits and dispositions which they produce, and the spirit which they foster in the nation at large, are not such as conduce to the attainment of the highest perfection which man can reach on earth, or, what is infinitely more important, to his preparation for eternity. That this will prove to be the case when they are unchecked and unmixed, as in America, I have no doubt whatever. The proportion, however, of those who take no part in politics, influenced to a great extent by the feelings which I have described the federalist, Mr.—, as expressing, is very considerable: there are 15,000 freeholders in this district, out of which not more than 8000 on an average vote.

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One morning I spent in visiting one of the “Latin” schools provided by the city, and examined the boys in Ovid and Lucian; they answered very well indeed, fully as well as boys of the same age (from twelve to fourteen) in our ordinary private schools; and the master seemed to be a good scholar: he gets 2000 dollars a year, which, considering the ordinary rate of incomes in the two countries, is as good as 1000 *l.* a-year in England. The boys are from all classes, but the majority from the middling and higher; some, however, are sons of mechanics, and one of an Irish scavenger. None of these latter return to their parents' occupations; they go to a college, the expense at which is about 40 *l.* or 50 *l.* a-year, and try the “professions.” One very common method of assisting to defray the expenses of a college course is to get employment as teachers in the district schools during the winter vacation; for this they get twenty dollars a month, and are “boarded” by the farmers in the neighbourhood: during the remainder of the year most of the country schools have only female teachers, who give elementary instruction to the younger children; so that any one who founds his estimate of the state of education throughout the country upon what he sees in the larger towns will go very far astray.

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I have now before me a very remarkable speech, full of matter for reflection, which was delivered on the 4th of July, by Mr. Mann, Secretary to the Board of Education in this State. His object is to show, first, the peculiar necessity for education which exists in a democracy; and, secondly, the inadequacy of its supply in the United States, and the evils resulting therefrom. If I had come here for the purpose of writing a book against America, I could not wish for a better text for my diatribes than the highly-wrought picture which Mr. Mann draws of the social and political evils which infest his country; but knowing, as I do, the amount of vice and ignorance which must exist in every country, and the facility with which, in any state of society, a “soul-harrowing” catalogue of crimes and miseries may be collected and enumerated, I have as little idea of founding an argument professing to be conclusive against American institutions upon Mr. Mann's data, as of admitting an

argument against those of England upon one of Lord Ashley's speeches about mines and factories. At the same time, I cannot but smile at the amusing seriousness with which the orator recommends, as a cure for the immense congeries of evil that he deplores, nothing more or less than *primary education* , that is, reading and writing,—“peculiar VOL. II. G 122 religious instruction” being the grand thing to be avoided. He is of Mr. Carlyle's school* evidently. My principal object in referring to this speech at present is to point out the error under which most of us labour (at least it was the case with myself) as to the proportion which education bears to population in the United States generally. In Virginia, for example, Mr. Mann calculates that one-fourth of the adult *whites* are unable to read and write; in North Carolina two-fifths are in the same category, (and these, be it remembered, are States where the lowest class are blacks, whose ignorance is almost universal); in Georgia about one-fourth, and so on. Again, he calculates that little more than one-half of the children between the ages of four and sixteen, in the Union, are now attending school; so that the number of uneducated persons is probably very much on the increase. I had always thought that nearly all native-born Americans had acquired (as they have the pecuniary means of acquiring) elementary education; but I now find that this (alleged) pre-eminence is confined to the Northern

* Mr. Carlyle seems to be receding from this and many other of his former theories. His last work (“Past and Present”) is not only eloquent and profound, but indicates a rapid advance in the direction of a Christian and a Catholic philosophy.— *Talis cum sis, utinam noster esses.*

123 States: the Southerns are pretty nearly on a par with those of the same class in Europe,—indeed, considering the comparative physical prosperity, I should rather say beneath them. I cannot leave Mr. Mann's speech without noticing the testimony borne by him to the universal instinct of nature, which leads men even here to revolt from carrying out the fashionable theory of non-religious education. “What a remarkable fact,” he says, “it is in the history of this commonwealth, that amongst all the splendid donations, amounting on the whole to many millions of dollars, which have been made

to colleges and academies, and to theological institutions, for the purpose of upholding the doctrines of some particular sect, only one man, embracing the whole of the rising generation in his philanthropic plan, and acting with a high and enlightened disregard of all local, partisan, and sectarian feeling, has given any considerable sum to promote the prosperity of common schools!" Thus it will always be, however men may be forced by circumstances to act while in a corporate capacity, and while prevented thereby from enforcing *peculiar* views; still, in the management of their own families, and the disposal of their own properties, they will seek for and promote an education which involves the teaching of what G 2 124 they believe to be the truth on the most important of all subjects.

I was much struck by a scene which I witnessed the other day while travelling in the interior. We stopped to change horses at a small tavern; the passengers collected round the fire in the bar-room, when the driver of the stage came in, and seeing a Bible lying on the chimney-piece, he opened it, and very deliberately read a chapter in a loud voice, every body remaining perfectly silent and attentive: when he had finished no comments were made, nor did any body appear to consider what he had done as at all out of place; it quite reminded one of the pilgrim fathers, their habits and their times.

Still, though such scenes may, perhaps, occasionally be even now met with in remote parts of the country, and though every where in New England the greatest possible decency and respect, with regard to morals and religion, is still observed, I have no hesitation in saying that I do not think the New-Englanders (or, indeed, the Americans generally, as far as I can judge) a *religious* people. The assertion, I know, is paradoxical, but it is nevertheless true; that is, if a strong and earnest *belief* be a necessary element in a religious character: to me it seems to be its very essence and foundation. I am not now speaking 125 of belief in *the truth* , but belief in something or any thing which is removed from the action of the senses. Now I appeal to any candid American whether it be not the received doctrine among nine-tenths of his countrymen, that creeds (religious dogmas, as they are called) are matters of no moment; that, so long as a man acts sincerely up to what he believes, he has as good a chance of salvation, *for he is as likely to be right* , as

his neighbour; and that morality (so called) is perfectly independent of, and infinitely more important than, religious belief. This is, I say, the avowed doctrine of the great majority now in America; and, as long as such is the case, outward morality may, indeed, prevail to a great extent (and I freely admit that in no country have I seen more appearances of it than in New England), under the influence of traditionary habits, enlightened self-interest, and the law of conscience; but there is no *religion.* No man can be said to believe in a religious system if he believes at the same time that another religious system has an equal chance of being true in the points of difference which exist between them; for all religions profess to be (as to their distinctive tenets) exclusively true, and propound doctrines to be believed as necessary to salvation: indeed, it is impossible to conceive a religion that should not G 3 126 do so; such a course would be not only shallow and unphilosophical, but self-contradictory and suicidal. This is pre-eminently the case with respect to Christianity; the apostolic epistles are filled with passages which, had they been written by a modern theologian, would have been branded as most intolerant and uncharitable: there they stand, however, witnessing against the indifferentism which I have described, proclaming that if an angel from heaven preach any other gospel he shall be accursed; and commanding us not even to bid God speed to any that “bring not this doctrine.” But this is not all: scepticism, with respect to “peculiar religious opinions,” is quite inconsistent with a strong uncompromising faith in what is supersensual and eternal; the same mind which rejects the evidence for the former cannot accept cordially, and become fully convinced of, the latter. Men are generally unconscious of this themselves; their consciences tell them that they ought to have a religion, and to act by its dictates: and they think they do so, when they are, in fact, only acting as any prudent, sensible, long-sighted person would act, if there were no world beyond the grave, and no law revealed from heaven. Self-denial, self-sacrifice, not temporary but permanent, to live and to feel as a stranger and a pilgrim upon earth, and to look upwards and forwards for a reward and a home,—these constitute the true tests of religious 127 earnestness; and of these, though I know there is little at home—comparatively little any where on earth,—I maintain that America presents even fewer symptoms or appearances. I am

not trusting to my own limited observation in arriving at this conclusion: I find in M. de Tocqueville's work an assertion of the same fact; he accounts for it, indeed, in a different way, and attributes it (like every thing else, according to his theory) to the operation of equality. I, on the contrary, am inclined to think that the materialism thus admitted to exist may chiefly be traced to the prevailing indifference with respect to religious creeds; and that this indifference, again, is intimately connected with the compulsory neutrality of the government in religious matters. In public schools, in the halls of the legislature, in national institutions, all religions are placed upon an equality; chaplains are selected indiscriminately from each, as the majority of the day may happen to determine, (one year, perhaps, a Roman Catholic, and the next a Unitarian); and the smallest preference of one religion to another, that is, the recognition of any definite, objective truth, would not be admitted for a moment. Now, this complete neutrality, entering, as it does, into so many parts of the system—every part, in fact, where men act in a corporate capacity,—may be necessary; indeed, I G 4 128 feel it quite impossible, under the actual circumstances of the United States, even to suggest an alteration or a remedy: but surely the effect upon the public mind must be very prejudicial to earnestness and zeal; and without earnestness and zeal religion is a name—a lifeless form.

On the other hand, I am quite ready to admit that, (as was, indeed, to be expected,) there is little acrimony or bitterness entering into religious controversy in America: whether the absence of *odium theologicum* be attributable to indifference (as I think), or to charity (as an American would probably contend), the effect is undoubted, and, *pro tanto* , highly desirable. Few things constitute a subject for more self-gratulatory contrasts to Americans than the mutual hostility and the proselytizing spirit of European sects, compared with the “philosophical and comprehensive tone which is fashionable among religionists here.” For my part, I prefer the earnest striving after truth, with its accompanying evil, to the carelessness about it, with its accompanying good. A party in Boston will comprise, generally, almost as many varieties of theological opinion as of individuals; and there will be no danger whatever of disagreeable discussions resulting therefrom: not merely

is the subject tacitly suppressed, or set aside, as forbidden ground, but there is none of 129 that embarrassment and awkwardness which it is hardly possible to avoid in the habitual intercourse of parties who, upon subjects which they have very much at heart, entertain radically opposite opinions, and which actually do appear, here as elsewhere, under *such* circumstances. A man who would feel himself embarrassed and uncomfortable if his next neighbour differed from him on the subject of a national bank, and who would certainly consider particular opinions about slavery as constituting a sufficient cause for avoiding the society of the man who held them, would express the most supreme and contemptuous indifference as to whether the rest of the party, with whom he was associating on the most intimate terms, were Christians or Mahometans, Heretics or Infidels. Is this habit reconcileable (I do not say in the case of every individual, but generally) with a true view of the relative importance of temporal and eternal interests? I have strong suspicions of the nature of that charity which leads to tolerance and "comprehensiveness" in religious matters alone, while upon all other subjects it leaves political rancour, party-feeling, and personal hostility untouched by its influence.

Again; I never heard of a man taking a decidedly religious tone in Congress, that is, openly professing Christian motives of action as influencing G 5 130 him in his legislative as well as his social capacity; indeed, I have reason to think that such a profession would expose him to jealousy and suspicion, as savouring of bigotry. I hope very many do act from such motives; but *that* public opinion cannot be in a healthy state, which would forbid their being avowed. America ought to ask herself why she has no such statesmen to boast of as a Wilberforce, a Gladstone, and many others, who have not been ashamed to recognise publicly in the British House of Commons the existence of a law paramount to the code of political expediency, and to avow the duty of guiding their political career by its dictates. Where this is not the case—where either from indifference or fear of offence the members of the governing body in a state can consent to exclude, as inconvenient and out of place, all reference to those religious influences which ought to be continually present to their recollection, pervading and colouring every part of their moral being, there is imminent

danger lest that state should sink to the level of a joint-stock company, combined for the mere purpose of securing the material interests of the partners, and political science, the [???]####[???]μ# [???]### #e##o#[???]##, be reduced there to the possession of a certain amount of economical knowledge and administrative dexterity.

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I am perfectly aware that, in answer to these observations, an American will point to the churches and chapels of all denominations, which are to be found in very respectable numbers *in the better-peopled parts of the country.* I reply, that I am perfectly aware that a great majority of the people profess some religion—it is decent and proper so to do: an American, generally speaking, likes to see his wife and children go to meeting on Sundays (though he is not a great “church-goer” himself), and subscribes to his minister's salary as he does to the maintenance of the district school, or the village fire-engine, because he thinks him a useful instrument in promoting order and civilisation, and the “public good.” What I complain of* is, not the absence of nominal, but of real, heart-felt, unearthly religion, such as led the puritan non-conformists to sacrifice country and kindred, and brave the dangers of the ocean and the wilderness, for the sake of what they believed to be God's truth. In my opinion, those men were prejudiced and mistaken, and committed great and grievous faults; but there was, at least, a redeeming element in their character—that of G 6

* These observations apply chiefly to the northern and central States. In the south and west I have good reason for thinking that there are very considerable numbers who *profess no religion.*

132 high conscientiousness: there was no compromise of truth, no sacrifice to expediency about them; they believed in the invisible, and they acted on that belief. Every where the tone of religious feeling, since that time, has been altered and relaxed; but, perhaps, nowhere so much as in the land where the descendants of those pilgrims live.

It is curious, by-the-by, to look back upon the history of these early Puritans, and to observe how little they ever dreamt of the theories which their descendants are so fond of associating with their names. “They only wanted toleration,” forsooth! “It was in the cause of civil and religious liberty that they suffered.” “It was to get rid of the principle of a dominant church that they crossed the Atlantic;”—and so on, according to most of the modern accounts of them by orators, historians, and poets. Now let us see what they say for themselves. I have just been reading an article in the New York Review, in which a number of passages have been collected out of contemporary documents, of which I will quote a few, which show clearly that neither the church party nor the non-conformists had the least idea of being satisfied with “liberty of conscience;” and that the true question was, not whether there should be a “dominant church” or not, but *what* 133 that dominant church should be. In 1572 the Puritans presented two “admonitions” to the parliament, in the first of which they say, “It has been thought good to prefer to your godly considerations a true platform of a church reformed, to the end that it being laid before your eyes, to behold the great unlikeness betwixt it and the English church, you may learn with perfect hatred to detest the one, and with singular love to embrace and *endeavour carefully to plant the other* ;” and in the second, the parliament were told, “that if they of that assembly would not follow the advice of their first admonition, they (the Puritans) would infallibly be their own carvers in it.” Again; the Gospel Advocate (pp. 84, 85.) mentions, “That every Christian magistrate is bound to receive this government (the Presbyterian) into the church within his dominions, whatever inconvenience may be like to follow the receiving of it;” that “the government of the church is aristocratical or popular, and that the government of the commonwealth must be framed according to the government of the church;” and that “the judicial law of Moses being still in force, no prince or law ought to save the lives of (*inter alios*) heretics, wilful breakers of the Sabbath, neglecters of the sacrament without just reason.” Well may the historian of the 134 Puritans (Neal) say, “Both parties agreed in asserting the necessity of a uniformity of public worship, *and of using the sword of the magistrate in support of their respective principles.* ” It should never be forgotten by those who are inclined to blame the severe laws passed against these non-conformists, that

the English government was dealing with men whose avowed wish and object it was, not simply to be tolerated, but to subvert existing institutions in church and state, and set up in their place those approved by themselves.

Let us now see how their conduct, when they had things their own way, illustrates their ideas of civil and religious liberty. In 1631 (four years after the foundation of the colony) it was enacted by the Massachusetts government, (I am still quoting from the Review), that no person should be admitted a freeman of their corporation unless he was a member of one of their congregational churches; thus excluding from the right of freemanship a large proportion of those who, by their charter, were possessed of that right. In 1634, the charge against Roger Williams was, “his holding divers exceptionable tenets,” one of which was, “that to punish a man for any matter of his conscience is persecution.” In remarking upon certain arbitrary proceedings with respect to the 135 rejection of Vane from the office of governor, Mr. Hutchinson (himself a Puritan) says, “Inquisition was made into men's private judgments, as well as their declarations and practices.” And again, “Toleration was preached against as a sin in rulers, which would draw down the vengeance of Heaven on the land.” But it is useless to multiply quotations; we have only to refer to Judge Story's abstract of the first laws enacted in the New England States, their establishment of congregationalism, their punishment of heretics, their exclusion of Quakers, Jews, &c., in order to see that they acted precisely as they complained of the English church and government for acting (or indeed far more intolerantly); and that the latter had to choose between putting them down and yielding to their demands. I have no wish to blame the Puritans for not acting in the sixteenth century upon the (now) admitted principles of toleration; I know what extreme difficulty the whole question presents, and how utterly untenable the popular argument against persecution (namely, the uncertainty of religious truth) is: on the contrary, conscientiously convinced as they were that it was a religious duty to aim at establishing the supremacy of their own platform of faith and discipline, their zeal in endeavouring to do so appears to me worthy of all admiration; and

136 I infinitely prefer such zeal (misguided, if you will, but sincere) to the latitudinarian maxim,—

“For forms and creeds let graceless zealots fight.”

I am only combating the error of those who would cry up the Puritans as the forerunners and representatives (in principle) of the modern dissenting school. They had infinitely better overcome their prejudices, and quote Jeremy Taylor on the Liberty of Prophesying.

It is commonly said that Boston is the most aristocratic city in the Union. Now it certainly is the richest; that is, there is more realized capital in Boston, as compared with its population, than in any other American town; and perhaps, also, that capital is accumulated in fewer hands, which always produces an aristocratic tendency. But I maintain that Boston is a thoroughly republican town: it is the metropolis of New England; and New England is still in one sense the mother-country and type of the States; it is from her that they have for the most part taken their habits, institutions, and character. Every American is really (as well as in common phraseology) a Yankee, more or less modified: this, therefore, is the place to which a stranger should come who wishes to see the general national characteristics in their most unmixed and most developed state. The constitution of society is much the 137 same as in a great English commercial town, and the principle of classification not very different from what our own would be, if the important element of family feeling, or respect for blood, were removed. Wealth is on the whole the foundation of what is called “good society;” but individuals will often find themselves admitted or excluded, independently of this, in consequence of personal qualifications, or the absence of them. So it is at home: in England no rule can be laid down, as at Vienna, or in the “vieille cour” of France, for admission or exclusion; good looks and good manners, conversational talents, or political notoriety, may enable a man with us at any time to become as familiar with the highest circles as though he were “born in the purple:” on the other hand, mere wealth, without such qualifications, seldom or never secures a footing in good society here; it has, however, in a great measure the same weight which

rank and family have in England, and for the same reason, namely, that it constitutes the best, or at least the most obvious and tangible, pledge of personal qualifications in the individual.

To-morrow will be my last day at Boston; I have therefore spent a good part of this in taking leave of those friends who have shown me so much hospitality and kindness during my stay. 138 The most painful incident of travelling is having to part, with scarcely a hope of meeting again, from those whose acquaintance we have made in a foreign country, and who have inspired us with feelings of friendship and regard. I certainly never felt this so strongly as now that I am about to leave Boston, to my abode in which I shall always look back with mingled feelings of pleasure and regret. But the less said about these things the better; and now for the road.

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LETTER XXI. PHILADELPHIA.

RAILROAD TO HUDSON.—WEST POINT.—AMERICAN ARMY.—AMERICAN TARIFF.—ITS EFFECTS UPON ENGLISH TRADE.—CAMP-MEETING AT NEWARK.—MILLERITES.—EFFECTS OF ENTHUSIASM.—PHILADELPHIA.—HIGH SCHOOL.—MODERN THEORY OF EDUCATION.—ITS PANTHEISTIC TENDENCIES.—PENITENTIARY.—SOLITARY SYSTEM.—GIRARD COLLEGE.—JUDICIAL SALARIES.—EFFECTS OF THEIR LOWNESS.—PENNSYLVANIAN DEBT.—REPEAL ASSOCIATIONS.—PICTURE-GALLERY.

Philadelphia, November.

After leaving Boston I travelled by “rail” to Hudson, 190 miles, and thence by steam-boat to West Point, on the North River, making altogether 270 miles in seventeen hours, and at an expense of only six dollars. This railroad is a wonderful work in point of engineering, being carried through a country almost as mountainous and difficult as North Wales, the scenery of which it strongly resembles, though far less bold and striking. The engineer was

Major Whistler, who has been since engaged in the service of the Emperor of Russia, and is now constructing the railroad between Moscow and St. Petersburgh. On all the railroads in this country they have very 140 long cars, with benches across them, each ear holding perhaps fifty people: they are not to be compared to ours in comfort, but they have the advantage of fire-places and stoves, which the severity of the winter renders necessary.

I stopped for a day at West Point to see the military academy, and am very glad to have done so: the situation of the hotel and the college buildings is most beautiful, on a high platform commanding the finest part of the Hudson, which, though now stripped of the glories of its foliage, I think I appreciated more than on either of my former trips. The weather is still, as it has been almost invariably since I came to America, cloudless and lovely; latterly there have been frosts at night, and occasionally cold winds during the day, but never rain. I could now count from memory every day upon which it has rained for nearly four months.

I brought a letter from one of my New England friends to a professor in the academy, Mr. —, who, like all the other instructors in every department, is an officer in the army; even the chaplain is a graduate of the academy, and consequently has borne a commission, though of course he has resigned it. All the officers in the service must have taken their degrees at West Point; and the examination is so severe that only about one-third 141 of the probationers succeed in passing it. The number of the students is equal to that of the members of Congress; for the plan of appointment is this: Every representative in Congress has a right to the nomination of one cadet from the congressional district which returns him, whenever that district is unrepresented at the academy. As soon as a young man is appointed (which he cannot be under the age of sixteen) he is provided for for life, if he qualify himself for passing the examination: this he may do in four years, during which time he is maintained and clothed, and upon graduating gets a commission immediately. He can easily (in fact almost all do) live upon his pay from the first: a second lieutenant has 750 dollars a year in the infantry, 1100 in the cavalry; promotion, which goes strictly by seniority, is of course slow, though not so slow as I should have expected,

considering that it depends almost entirely on mortality. The worst part of the system is, that as there are no pensions, except under extraordinary circumstances, and no sale of commissions, there is absolutely no inducement for officers to leave the service, so that they remain in it till they die. This principle has hardly had time to work itself out yet, but its results are already (as I am told by military men) apparent to a considerable extent; and a large proportion of the officers will soon be infirm and 142 imbecile old men. There is a larger army than I had supposed, upwards of 11,000 men, who are employed entirely on the frontiers, and (latterly) in Florida; indeed, strange to say, the proportion of the naval and military expenditure in America to the total amount of the ordinary revenue is greater than either in Great Britain or France, (the latter, the military, alone amounted to about one half of the revenue in 1838* , 12,665,000 dollars out of 24,309,000). Besides which, the expenditure upon the militia is to be taken into consideration: it is a great mistake to suppose that a force such as the American militia, or the Prussian Landwehr, costs the country nothing, or even that it is a cheap defensive establishment. When we calculate the number of days' labour sacrificed for the purpose of drilling, and add to it the expense of equipments, we shall probably find that, *as compared with its efficiency* , a militia force is the most expensive which a country can employ.† The proportion of officers to men in the American

* I have taken the statistics in the text from Judge Jay's pamphlet, before referred to.

† Judge Jay estimates the expense of the American militia at 50,000,000 dollars a year, which, added to the 12,000,000, before mentioned, presents the astounding total of 13,000,000 *l.* a-year (in round numbers) expended for military purposes. This is more than the army *and navy* of Great Britain cost together.

143 service is considerably greater than in other armies, so as to allow of a sudden increase in the establishment, and ensure a supply of disciplined officers to train and command the recruits. I went to hear one of the professors examine a class this morning, and was surprised to find that the subject of recitation was English grammar, though the age of the scholars averaged seventeen and eighteen. The fact is, that the appointments

being made generally through political influence, which of course, under a constitution like that of America, is often possessed to a great extent by individuals of the lowest class in society, many of the nominees come to the academy (particularly from the south and west) destitute of the very rudiments of education; to such, however, unless they are very clever or diligent, the difficulty of the examination is an insufferable obstacle: and on the whole I have good reason for believing that a graduate of the West Point Academy has a more difficult course to master, and consequently is obliged to know more, than those who get their commissions from Sandhurst or Woolwich.

I was much surprised and gratified by what I heard, while at West Point, of the state of the church in the army. It seems that all the officers who profess any religious faith belong to the Anglo-American communion, and that the academy 144 at West Point is one of its strongholds. Although not one twentieth part of the population are churchmen, four-fifths of the chaplains in the two services, including the chaplain at West Point, a distinguished theologian, are so; and as these are generally appointed with reference to the demand for their services in the different ships and regiments, the proportion may serve as a pretty fair criterion of the influence of the church in the army and navy. Several officers were pointed out to me (and to some of them I was introduced) who are now communicants of the church, and all of these have conformed lately; for it is only within the last few years that so much progress has been made. Most of them were brought up as sectarians, or rather indifferentists (“ *Christians* ,” as they call themselves, but without any “particular” creed), and have been baptized, when adults, by ordained clergymen. All those with whom I conversed expressed great interest in the “Catholic” movement now in progress among ourselves, and spoke with enthusiasm of the effect which it had had in promoting zeal and earnestness as well as orthodoxy in the American church.

From West Point I again took steam for New York, and soon found myself domiciled *au cinquième* at the Astor House, *i. e.* at about the altitude of the ball on the top of St. Paul's.

At New York I found heaps of letters waiting for me from home and from Canada. The bad financial news from England seems to create considerable sensation here. Much, I have no doubt, of our commercial distress arises from the almost total cessation of the American demand for our goods, consequent upon the derangement of credit in this country. Out of 50,000,000 *l.* of our exports the United States take nearly 12,000,000 *l.* , so that we cannot but feel to an important extent, at least temporarily, the effects of their inability to buy. The best authorities do not seem to think that the American tariff will very materially affect our interests. In the first place, it is so absurd that it must be repealed, or at least considerably modified, when the democratic party come into power; and, as this is generally known, people are not inclined to invest capital on the strength of the protection it affords: in the second place, the Americans cannot supply their own market, and consequently *must* take our goods, either by paying a higher price (to cover the duty), or through a contraband channel. It is impossible for the Americans to guard a frontier of 1500 miles, from Amherstburgh to the River St. John. We may be able to keep out their raw produce (though I doubt it), but they never can keep out VOL. II. H 146 our manufactures. Smuggling has been nearly knocked up in Canada since the reduction of the tariff here; but they are full of hopes again now that the province may become once more the channel of an important trade between England and the United States. Notwithstanding these considerations, I am sure that upon many articles a considerable protective duty will continue to be maintained, at least for some time: there is a great demand for it by the manufacturers; and (as Adam Smith has shown) they are always more efficient and successful in their combinations and agitations than agriculturists.

From New York I proceeded to Newark, a town on the road to Philadelphia, for the purpose of seeing a camp-meeting of “Millerites,” or “Second-Advent Christians,” who contend that the world is to come to an end on the 14th of April, 1843, supporting their theory by a particular interpretation of Scripture prophecies. There were a good many tents pitched on a piece of waste ground near the town, some boarding-tents, others lodging-tents, and a very large one for preaching in. There were also booths where tracts

advocating the Millerite doctrines were sold; and a great number of people “loafing” about, some believers, some visitors, and “some that came to mock, and some to pray.” The nucleus of the meeting consisted in a body of 147 preachers, with their families and servants, to whom the tents belong, and who perambulate the whole country in a Bedouin fashion, pitching their tents for a week or ten days together at any place which they think suitable, and then issuing placards and advertisements, and carrying on a succession of religious services—preaching, praying, singing, and recounting religious experiences daily during their sojourn. The patriarch and prophet of the caravan is Mr. Miller himself, from whom the sect takes its name; he was a Baptist minister in Vermont, and about eight or ten years ago began to disseminate his theory of prophetic interpretation, teaching that the visible earth is to be burned next year, and its place to be taken by the New Jerusalem, where the saints are to reign with our Saviour, in the literal sense, for one thousand years; with many details which I forget. The pith of it, however, and the point by which the terrors of the multitude are excited, is, that all this is to take place next year; and his stock argument is, that if he were an impostor he would not fix a time so close at hand, and thereby allow so short a duration to his fraud. For my part, I do not think him an impostor, but a fanatic: some of the preachers, however, I strongly suspect; their manner and appearance are bad, and they have the handling of a great deal of money, for contributions H 2 148 are raised at every meeting, and those who give in their adhesion subscribe largely to the common fund. I was fortunate enough to hear Miller himself preach, which he did for about two hours in the large tent, to three or four hundred people: he is tolerably fluent and plausible, but totally deficient in clearness and method; and I found it quite impossible to follow him in his argument from prophecy. After he had concluded, a young man got up and spoke with great vehemence for some time, detailing the process of his conversion to Millerism, which took place *only six hours before.* He had never read Miller's book, but said that it was the Bible that converted him. “We are not *Millerites* ,” he reiterated, “but Scriptureites; the Bible, and the Bible only, is our creed.” This man was a Methodist preacher. Several others spoke; some very violently against their opponents, others (following Miller's example) in a milder spirit, as though

they did not consider disagreement from their own tenets as damnatory. There was a good deal of praying and singing; and during all the services people from different parts of the congregation were calling out in a loud tone, at intervals, “Amen!” “Glory be to God!” with other similar ejaculations. Some of the women, and even a few men, wept very much, but on the whole there was but 149 little excitement or agitation; indeed, the only wonder was, how there could be any upon a question of what may be called strict criticism in interpreting particular prophecies: but they managed to turn the subject to denunciations and declamations of the most incoherent kind, assuming their case (that this is to be the last year of the world) as proved, and proceeding to exhort men to flee in time from the wrath to come; and whenever they spoke thus the audience appeared to sympathise with them. Indeed, if people were really persuaded that the world was to be burned up, and the judgment to come in six months, there would be little need of exhortations to amendment of life; but the fact is, that few believe (in the true sense of the word) any thing about the matter. On the whole, I am of opinion, both from what I have observed myself and what I have heard and read, that the amount of enthusiastic feeling generated by revivals and camp-meetings in America, and the extent of its operation, have been considerably exaggerated; that the influence which they exercise upon the national mind and character is very small, but that such as they do exercise is decidedly beneficial. Fanaticism is a bad thing, but materialism is infinitely worse: the former is the misdirection and corruption of a sound principle; the latter is H 3 150 essentially and radically evil. With the wildest enthusiast we have common ground to go upon: when a man has once acknowledged and felt the want, the necessity, of a religion, I believe that nothing but defective information, or defective reasoning powers, or the effects of moral infirmity, prevent him from becoming a sound and orthodox Christian; whereas, with a man contented to be a sceptic, and to believe in nothing, it is really almost impossible to deal. If a man take, like Montaigne, for his motto, “ *Que sais-je?* ” and for his device an even balance,—if he have arrived at the conviction that there is so much doubt and difficulty about all moral questions as to make the search after truth hopeless, and if he is satisfied with that conviction, all reasoning will

be thrown away upon him; he denies the primary axiom upon which it must rest. *We* say, that universal pyrrhonism would drive an earnest-minded man mad; and we adduce—

“The pleasing hope, the fond desire, The longing after immortality,”

the instinctive fears of the wicked, and the aspirations of the good, as proofs decisive that man must have a religion; and (that being granted) we have no difficulty in asserting, as against any other religion, the claims of Catholic Christianity. But if our opponent deny the existence of such wants and feelings, and profess himself satisfied to 151 float down the stream of existence without any other guide than sensual instinct, or calculations of temporary expediency, it is vain to expect that reasoning upon evidences will make any impression upon him; it is hopeless to attempt it.* We must leave him till there comes a time of sickness or sorrow, or approaching death, and see in what stead his theories will stand him then. It is the creed (if creed it can be called) of such men as these, not avowedly, perhaps, but virtually entertained, of the prevalence of which there appears to me to exist so much danger in the present day, and more especially in America.† Religious fanaticism is evidently not *the* danger of the country, H 4

* On reading over this passage some lines of Lamartine's occur to my mind, which are so beautiful that I cannot resist the temptation of transcribing them:—

“Ces vœux nous trompaient-ils? Au néant destinés Est-ce au néant que les êtres sont nés? Partageant le destin du corps qui la recèle, Dans la nuit du tombeau l'âme s'engloutit-elle? Tombe-t-elle en poussière, ou prête à s'envoler Comme un son qui n'est plus? va-t-elle s'exhaler Après un vain soupir, après l'adieu suprême, De tout ce qui t'aimait? n'est-il plus rien qui t'aime? Ah sur ce grand secret n'interroge que toi; Vois mourir ce qui t'aime, Elvire, et réponds-moi.”

† A very curious prophecy (as it may be called) of the late Mr. Southey, has been quoted lately (in the “Dublin University Magazine”), which appears to have met with a striking fulfilment in the present day. Mr. Southey speaks of the probability that the Western

States of America would become the theatre for the operations of a military prophet. Joseph Smith and his Mormons, whose career answers to this prognostication, will, in all likelihood, soon pass away. I see no probability of a long duration to, or extensive effect resulting from, their imposture.

152 however extravagantly it may show itself at particular seasons and places: such extravagances will naturally take place where persons of religious dispositions (without a corresponding strength of judgment), and imbued with the dissenting principle, feel the necessity of a reaction against the unsatisfying materialism which surrounds them; but they do not affect the mass, or, if they do, the impression is very slight and transient, and perhaps even, as far as it goes, beneficial. In many of the thinly-peopled districts, where there are few resident ministers, there would (humanly speaking) be no religion at all, if it were not for the assemblies which have been the object of so much obloquy. At the same time, while I acknowledge the good effect which they have often produced, I would not be supposed to approve of their being countenanced or joined in by clergymen of the church. We must not do evil that good may come of it: and no sound churchman can, I think, doubt, that to meet on common religious ground with the members of omnigenous (and often heretical) sects, and to 153 make use of irregular and unauthorised modes of creating religious excitement, is (in *his* case) “to do evil.”

From Newark I came on to Philadelphia, where I now am, in an excellent hotel, called the United States. On Sunday I went to church twice at St. Peter's, a large building, and well filled; the communion was administered, and a great number (more than half the congregation) partook of it. Both the sermons were of the flowery, ambitious kind, which is fashionable in this country. A chime was ringing at this church before service; the first, I believe, that was ever heard in Philadelphia, for the bells have just been hung; and a good deal of surprise and curiosity seemed to be excited by the unusual sounds.

Mr. F., to whom I had brought letters from home and from Boston, has taken me to see the “central high school” of Philadelphia, an institution of a peculiar kind. It is a free school,

and meant to finish the course of education begun at the primary and grammar schools; admission to it constituting a prize for the cleverest and best-conducted boys. Thirty thousand children are in course of education at the inferior seminaries in Philadelphia, and about 350 at the high school. Boys are admitted at the age of twelve, and remain four years, during which time they are taught H 5 154 “every thing and something else;” mathematics of every sort, chemistry, natural philosophy, comparative anatomy, French, Spanish,—in short, all the physical sciences and modern languages. The institution is very costly, and well conducted. The professors, who are numerous, receive large salaries, and are, I should think, well qualified for their situations: but the whole principle of the system is, in my opinion, radically wrong; I cannot look upon it in any other light than as an elaborate piece of quackery. Theology is of course excluded, and consequently, to a great extent, ethics and metaphysics, which can hardly be separated from it; and the classics, in conformity with the universal prejudice which exists against the study of them in this country, are also much neglected. Thus the most effectual method of refining the taste* and disciplining the mind is disregarded,

* The prevalence of what is called “fine writing” in American composition is perfectly astonishing. *We* used to be laughed at for the chrononhotonthologos style of our “Irish eloquence;” but we are very Addisons compared to our Transatlantic friends. Is not this false taste obviously connected with their contempt of the classics? It certainly appears to me the most unpleasing feature about American literature. One would not quarrel with a certain degree of rudeness, want of polish, or superficiality: the Americans have so much to do elsewhere that they may easily be forgiven for not writing or reading anything very profound, or carefully wrought; but the redundancy of ornament that we find every where, the pretension and the flourish, exceedingly provoke ill-natured criticism.

155 while the preponderating attention paid to physical science tends to fix the mind (already too prone to it) exclusively upon the visible, the material, the “useful.” I feel more and more convinced every day that the converse of this is the course which instructors ought to adopt in these days; that “he proper study of mankind is man”—man in his

spiritual nature, as “ *Divinæ particula auræ;* ” and that the pursuit of those studies and sciences which minister to his worldly enjoyment should be but ancillary and secondary;—

“Unless *above* himself he can Erect himself, how mean a thing is man!”

“Fruit and progress,” says the Baconian philosopher, or one who assumes the name, (meaning thereby the “fruit” of sensual enjoyment, and the “progress” of civilisation and the “arts of life”), “are the great ends and objects of our being,—the tests of true philosophy.” Well, we have now been acting upon that principle in England for a great number of years, and, it must be confessed, with great success,—that is, we have made wonderful discoveries; we have dived into the secrets of nature, and forced powers and elements hitherto unknown to minister to us; we have accumulated unimagined wealth; we have brought nearly to the perfection of luxury the art of living: and what H 6 156 is the result? Is England merrier now than she used to be? more contented, more loyal, more religious? Alas! the united voice of the press, the parliament, the nation, answers, “No.” And yet people flatter themselves that nothing more is wanted than a further development of the same system, a more consistent carrying-out of the same principles, in order to remedy the evils which exist; and here in America, where all manifestly tends to a far more rapid consummation of the same result,—where the same principles are at work, unchecked by the counteracting causes which linger among ourselves, every effort seems to be made to allow them full and undisturbed action.

It is not that the nineteenth century professes to disregard religion: if it did I should say it was a somewhat bold, but at least candid and consistent century; and its doctrine would present far greater difficulties than it now does to the mind of the Christian inquirer. He would have to confess the apparent incompatibility of religious faith with the obviously providential march of civilisation; he would be pressed by the argument, that as the intellect of mankind was developed, and his knowledge increased, it seemed a necessary consequence that he should throw aside, as fitted only for an earlier and more imperfect stage of social progress, 157 the superstitious belief in a future state and a Supreme

Being. But we are spared this trial: in the worst of times the worst of nations cannot (permanently) deny God; they dare not do so; they only forget Him. Not merely do the highest and noblest natures recognise most strongly the want of a communion with the invisible, the longing after objects of faith, which is the foundation of all religion, but the great majority of ordinary men cannot bring themselves to deny those truths, with the reality of which their own practice is so inconsistent; and thus we are enabled to take advantage of a testimony, the more valuable, perhaps, because it is reluctant.

But it cannot be denied that the practical irreligion of modern times, as compared with the days of crusades, and ordeals, and cathedral building (of course I only speak of these as symptoms, not as universally desirable results, of faith), is very remarkable; and not the least striking symptom of it is the preference and precedency which is every day more and more given to physical science. An American metaphysician would be a sort of contradiction in terms.*

* I never felt more strongly than when visiting America the truth of the poet's words:—

“Alas! the genius of our age from schools Less humble draws her lessons, aims, and rules; To prowess guided by her insight keen, Matter and spirit are as one machine. Boastful idolatress of formal skill, She in her own would merge the Eternal will.rdquo; *Wordsworth.*

And the result is a tendency to a cold, blank materialism, so unsatisfying, so deadening to the best feelings of the mind and heart, that rather than see it prevail I could invoke, with Max Piccolomini, “the fair humanities of old religion,”—

“tiefere Bedentung, Liegt in dem Mährehen meiner Kinderjahre.”

To see a God in every star, to people every wood and stream with guardian spirits, is infinitely better than to recognise the existence of neither God nor spirit any where; for in fact it comes to that, those who call themselves Pantheists being, in nine cases out of ten, practically Atheists. Perhaps extremes meet in this case, so that the prevalence of

Pantheistic doctrines among the educated classes may be connected with, and lead to, superstition and idolatry among the vulgar. Coleridge has remarked that it was so with respect to the gnosticism which infected the early church, as it has always been among the Buddhists of the East; and we are told that, in the present day, there is a reaction in France towards exaggerated Romanism from the doctrines of Victor Hugo and George Sand. If such a tendency exist, I look upon it as, *pro tanto*, a consolatory symptom; but I do not observe any trace of it in Germany, or in those parts of America where, though there may be little conscious Pantheism, there is among a numerous and increasing class an inward withdrawing (to use Coleridge's words) from the Life and Personal Being of God, a turning of the thoughts exclusively to the so-called physical Attributes, a disposition to put Fate in the place of a Creator and Moral Governor, and—

"To worship *Nature* in the hill and valley, Not knowing what they love."

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The Philadelphia High School (from whence I digressed some time ago) seems prosperous and in 159 favour; all classes, from the rich merchant and lawyer to the Irish cabman, send their sons to it, and at the mature age of sixteen receive them back, mechanics, philosophers, rhetoricians, linguists,—in short, finished and accomplished men.

My next "lion" was the Penitentiary, which is conducted upon a principle quite different from that of most of the other prisons in America. Each prisoner is kept in a separate cell, where he lives and works, and which he never leaves during the whole period of his confinement: he is ordinarily not seen, except by his keeper, his instructor, and the chaplain, so that his character cannot in after-life be blasted by those who have known him in prison; he makes no pernicious acquaintances, and must often, one would suppose, be led by the silence and solitude in which he lives to remorse and reformation. Each man has his work set for him, generally weaving; and after performing an appointed task, he is allowed to receive and lay by the profits of his extra work: books are also allowed him;

and he is well fed three times a day. The cells are large, airy, and comfortable, and to each there is a little court attached, where, for an hour a day, the prisoner takes the air. Altogether it is an admirably-conducted establishment, and the system appears to me in most respects preferable to that of Auburn (where, you know, they work 160 in gangs), as being better calculated both to deter and to reform—the two great ends of punishment. I had imagined that the effects of solitude so nearly complete upon the mind would have been much too severe (and indeed there are instances on record where reason has given way); but after seeing the prison and the criminals, and questioning the officials, I was led to believe that this was not so much the case as I expected: they almost all seemed healthy, and intent upon their work; in one or two I fancied I could detect something of a wild stare, but it was probably only produced by meeting a stranger's eye, which is of course an event that seldom happens. The keeper told me that there is hardly an instance of a young offender returning, though a few hardened old sinners, who have spent half their lives in gaols, do so repeatedly. While I was there an unfortunate criminal was brought in, his head covered with a cap, and consigned to his solitary abode. One was dismissed last week, the gaoler told me, who had been for twelve years immured, and who was in excellent health and spirits. They sometimes save 100 dollars during their term.* The grand objection to

* The keepers strongly assert that cases of deranged intellect, of which several were reported some years ago, hardly ever occur now. But I have not seen the reports upon this head; and the statements of interested parties must be taken with several grains of allowance. *If they are true*, I have no doubt about this system being the preferable one. The rules of the prison at Philadelphia are more severe than those of the model prison at Pentonville, and their solitude much less broken.

161 this system, in the eyes of the Americans, is the additional expense which it entails, both from the greater space required for the cells and courts, and the smaller quantity of work which can be got out of the prisoners when working separately, so as to preclude the possibility of effectively superintending and directing their labours. Most of the prisons of

the other class support themselves, while this costs a large annual sum; the consequence is, that Pennsylvania stands alone (with the exception of one prison in New Jersey) in adopting the solitary system.

The same afternoon I went to see the unfinished building which is to be the Girard College, of which the history is as follows: Some years ago a French merchant, resident in Philadelphia, died, and left the bulk of his property (which was immense) in trust, to establish an institution for educating orphan children, after a fashion which he specified; they were to be boarded, lodged, and instructed in those branches of study which are considered necessary for mechanical and commercial pursuits, and at the age 162 of sixteen bound to trades; they were to receive a “moral,” but (specifically) no religious education whatever,—at least such seems to have been his intention, undoubtedly, though it was so worded that the provision will, I believe, be evaded; at any rate, he desired that no “clergyman of any persuasion” should have access, even as a visitor, to the institution, and this must be complied with. He specified, with the utmost minuteness, the materials and dimensions of the building,—and a very extraordinary effect it has; every part is of white marble, except the doors; the roof, in particular, is of marble slabs, and beautifully executed; the rooms are all vaulted, and the staircases, floors, and walls all of the same substance and colour. It is certainly a “ *monumentum ære perennius* ,” and seems likely to last as long as the Alleghanies, unless America becomes too democratic to bear such a *conservative* style of architecture. So much money has been spent upon the structure that, I believe, the remainder of the fund will be inadequate to work the institution effectually; and the whole affair, being in the hands of an elective town-council, which changes every year, has been, and is likely to be, wretchedly managed.

There have been great riots here during the summer between the whites (principally Irish) 163 and the negroes, in which the latter were dreadfully ill-treated: the trials of the rioters (*i. e.* of the few who were arrested, for the authorities were very remiss or inefficient in repressing the disturbance,) is soon to come on; and there is a general impression that it will be impossible to convict them: in this respect affairs are worse here than with us,

inasmuch as not only the juries but the judges lie under the temptation of being influenced by the popular feeling and voice. There is no point upon which the advance of democracy has been more felt than in the diminution of judicial independence; and there is no principle which, if unchecked, is more likely to prove fatal, not merely to good government, but to the cohesion of society. Formerly, in this State, the judges were appointed during good behaviour; it is now only for a term of years: and the same is, I believe, the case in all the other states; in some the office has been made directly elective, and in a few even *annually* changeable.* The supreme

* The inadequacy, too, of the judges' salaries is very prejudicial to the composition of the bench: it is impossible to expect first-rate lawyers to give up their business for such a paltry remuneration as is allowed in almost all the States. A gentleman belonging to the Maryland bar told me one or two curious anecdotes illustrative of this. One of the judges lately descended from the bench, and accepted the situation of *clerk in his own court!*—a situation in the gift of himself and his brother justices: his own salary had been 2500 dollars a-year; that of the clerk, whom he succeeded, amounted, with fees, to 5000. The late Chief Justice of New Hampshire, whose salary was 1300 dollars a-year, has also left his post, to become superintendent of one of the Lowell factories. When such is the emolument and dignity of the judicial office, it is only astonishing that it has not fallen into utter contempt, or become, as in Russia, a recognised system of bribery. The vigilance of public opinion prevents the prevalence of the latter; and then the title is something, common as it is: men are willing to sacrifice some dollars for the honour of presiding instead of pleading in a court. Lawyers' fees seem to me on the other hand (proportionably), very large, but are often arranged on the principle of “no success, no pay.” I have heard (but by no means vouch for the fact) that Mr. Grimes, of Louisiana, once received 60,000 dollars for gaining one cause; and some of Daniel Webster's recorded fees are enormous.

164 court of the United States is almost the only permanent judicial body; and as its regulations are part of the constitution of the United States, which cannot be altered except

by a very complicated and difficult process, it is to be hoped that it may long continue so. It has, however, been already the object of much outcry and attack, which is not likely to decrease in violence.

I hear great doubts expressed as to whether the Pennsylvanian legislature will be willing to provide for the payment of state debts by direct taxation, though all confess the perfect ability to do so; and among the respectable part of the population there is, of course, no second opinion as to 165 the obligation: but the mob returns the legislature, and the mob have but a dim sense of national honour and responsibility. It must be admitted that the present state of affairs strengthens to an immense extent the arguments of those who are unfavourable to popular institutions: as long as the “great republic”* refuses to pay her just debts she must expect to forego the homage of European liberals,—her glory is under a cloud;—

* I think we have a perfect right to consider the reputation of the federal government as tainted by the dishonesty which is avowed by so many of her constituent States, particularly as the diffusion of responsibility, which is looked upon as one of its main causes, exists to nearly the same extent throughout the Union. It should not be forgotten, too, that private property cannot be long secure in a country where such a principle is recognised as that of repudiation. It becomes little more than a question of time and calculation, as to when it will be the interest, or fancied interest, of the majority, to proceed to indiscriminate spoliation. As long as the majority are proprietors, so direct and sweeping a proceeding is impossible: but the period when that will no longer be the case must arrive; and in the meanwhile, are particular classes safe? When it is once recognised by *legislatures* that honesty depends upon expediency, not upon duty, every right is at sea and insecure.

“Nec quisquam numen Juuonis adoret Præterea, aut supplex aris imponat honorem.”

Feelings of this nature are very strongly and universally expressed among the citizens of the solvent 166 states. I remember a merchant in New York telling me that he should be quite ashamed now to show his face among men of business in Europe, where formerly he considered the name of an American citizen as the proudest of distinctions. For my own part, I cannot help believing, in spite of appearances to the contrary, that sooner or later the defaulting states will be forced by this moral “pressure from without,” as well as from enlarged considerations of expediency, to pay every farthing; but it may be a long time before this takes place. In this State, the most powerful united body is composed of Germans, by whom the agricultural districts are in a great measure settled; they are said to be very ignorant and stupid, and to think of nothing but “gold,” so they are all against taxation. The fact, that all over America the most ultra-democratic population is also invariably the most ignorant, ought to have its weight with us in forming a judgment on the advantages which may attend even a purely secular education.

An opinion, which travelling in this country has caused me to modify, is that which respects the permanence of national, hereditary character, as transmitted independently of local and political circumstances. Almost every body here tells me that even in the second generation (that is, in the children of emigrants) it is nearly impossible to 167 recognise a distinction in habits or character between those of English, Scotch, and Irish blood. They are all American, wherever there is constant intercourse with the mass of the population, though, of course, not so where they live in districts or towns exclusively together. My own experience tends strongly to confirm this remark.

I have been conversing upon the subject of the repeal associations here, and find that they are condemned, like most other anomalies, by respectable Americans, though they confess that many of their leading politicians have flattered and supported them for electioneering purposes, to make “political capital,” as they call it, out of them. The Americans look upon the Irish Roman Catholic population with a singular mixture of contempt and jealousy* ; individually, they seem to be regarded much as they were by

William Cobbett, who says, “The wild Irish have all the characteristics of savages, except sobriety and sincerity:” but, taken as a body, they are too formidable by their numbers and their union to be neglected by a popular candidate. The idea

* Since the passage in the text was written, a remarkable confirmation of it has been exhibited by the establishment of a party in New York, who call themselves “Native Americans.” Their professed object is to counteract the growth of Irish influence; and their success has been already so unexpectedly great, that they bid fair to carry the next elections.

168 that any native-born Americans should invest money so unprofitably as in a “sympathetic” fund for O'Connell, out of an abstract love for Ireland, or hatred of England, appears to me simply preposterous: they may talk, but they will certainly not pay.

Yesterday an American gentleman kindly devoted the morning to “lionizing” me over all sorts of libraries, and museums, and institutes; but my time was so limited that I fear I carried away a very vague and dream-like impression of them. I wrote down my name in the Pennsylvania Picture Gallery (being the tenth visitor within the last eight days); and was delighted with the considerate delicacy of an old woman who acted as Cicerone, and who, after pointing, with half-averted head, to a curtained copy of one of Titian's Venuses in a corner, gave me a wand wherewith to remove the veil, and then blushingly retreated behind the door while I did so. Oh! how I wished for somebody to laugh with.

At dinner, at Mr.—'s, I met a perfect specimen of a race almost extinct—the Carolinian gentleman of the old school, who has inherited a large paternal estate through a series of generations. Almost all such properties have crumbled away under the influence of the principle of subdivision; and as the owners have not yet acquired the 169 commercial, money-making habits of their northern neighbours, this class of “Southerners” are, generally speaking, in rather a ruinous condition. Luckily the unlimited West is open to them; and thither they depart with their slaves and stock, whenever they find it impossible to make a livelihood at home. VOL. II I

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LETTER XXII. BALTIMORE.

MR. DICKENS'S“NOTES.”—BALTIMORE.—ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH. —INCOMPATIBILITY OF CATHOLICISM AND DEMOCRACY.—BALTIMORE ALMSHOUSE.—FARM-SCHOOL.—NEGRO COLONIZATION IN AFRICA.—MARYLAND IN LIBERIA.—PROBABLE RESULTS OF THE EXPERIMENT.

Baltimore, November.

From Philadelphia I travelled by railroad and steam-boat to Baltimore, 115 miles, in seven hours and a half. On board the boat I bought Dickens's work on America (price 6 *d.*), the eagerness of anticipation for which it is impossible to describe; every individual one meets is reading it or talking about it. How very funny it would appear at home to see people looking out in this way for the critique of a foreigner upon England! Most people seem exceedingly angry with Dickens; they dwell particularly on the enthusiasm of friendly feeling and admiration with which he was received, and the unnecessary ill-nature with which, they say, he has retrained it: as to the laudatory parts of the book they are quite forgotten in dwelling upon the remarks about slavery, Congress, &c.

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I find myself in another of these admirable American hotels, which one meets with in all the towns: for the best of entertainment and attendance the price is seven shillings a day.

Baltimore is a handsome town, with good buildings and spacious streets, and is surrounded by a very pretty park-like country, interspersed with villas, and reminding one of English suburban scenery. The style of architecture is “oldworldlike,” and has not the glaring, unsubstantial look of New York and Boston, though in fact Baltimore is a much more modern town. It was settled by Lord Baltimore, a Roman Catholic, and has always been considered the head-quarters of the Romish church in the States. There are still a good number of old families in it, who profess their original faith, but a large proportion

of them have left it; and the mass of the Roman Catholic population is composed of Irish and German emigrants, the latter of whom particularly abound, both from the facility of communication between Baltimore and the West, and from the intercourse with the North of Germany, which the commerce of tobacco produces. There is a very massive and costly Roman Catholic cathedral not quite finished, the architecture of which I do not admire at all. The style is new to me, nor have I any idea what it may be called. I 2

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It is, I know, very generally supposed in England that the Papal communion has made great progress lately in America, particularly in the West; but a ter having made careful inquiry upon the subject, I have good reason for thinking that this impression is an erroneous one. There are, indeed, large Roman Catholic establishments for education, with considerable endowments, in Missouri and Ohio; and as their administrative machinery is, as usual, excellent, and their zeal for proselytism ardent, they no doubt effect some conversions among the young persons who are sent to take advantage of their instruction, and in so doing accomplish, in most cases, a very desirable result; for those who are thus converted would probably have been otherwise brought up, either without religion at all, or in the tenets of some utterly heretical sect: but in no part of the country is there any thing like a general movement in favour of Romanism, or an appearance of increasing predilection for its doctrines. Such accessions as I have mentioned are more than counterbalanced by the desertions which occur among the children and descendants of Roman Catholic emigrants; so that, on the whole, although the members of that communion increase in consequence of emigration from Europe, there is every reason to suppose that, except for that emigration, a decrease would take place. Nine-tenths of the Roman Catholics 173 are Irish, at least in the Atlantic States, as are all the priests, with scarcely an exception,* Along the Mississippi, from St. Louis to New Orleans, there are a good number of descendants of the French and Spaniards, who adhere to the communion of their ancestors; but these are foreign, in all their habits and feelings, secular and religious, from the mass of the American community; in fact, it may

be said, *generally* , that in proportion as the American type of character prevails, Roman Catholic peculiarities recede and disappear. Reasoning *à priori* , I should have said that this was probable; and facts every where seem to confirm my opinion. In America, as has been the case in Europe, Protestantism and popular principles go hand in hand; the same temper of mind naturally (I do not say *necessarily*) producing and fostering both. The church of Rome may be led, by that secularity which has been always her bane, to ally herself with democracy when it suits her political purposes; but in doing so she sacrifices, *pro tanto* , the spirit of her religious character. We have seen her acting in this manner at the time of the League in France, I 3

* It is remarkable that while the Roman Catholic population is to the “Episcopalian” (as they are called) in the ratio of 13 to 8, the number of priests is very little more than half as large.

174 and in the present century in Ireland and Belgium: but, though as a secular power she may, as a religious system she cannot, make progress in such a conjunction; it is felt to be unnatural, and to involve constant difficulty and compromise. It would be, however, a great mistake to suppose that the masses, who act under the influence of their church in such cases, feel any such difficulty: the fact is, that they are not really imbued at all with democratic or levelling principles; they act in a spirit of blind obedience, and would shout as loudly to-morrow, if their priests were to bid them, for an arbitrary monarch, as they do to-day for the sovereign people. The priests themselves who lead the movements are, I maintain, inconsistent, and merge religious feelings in secular interests; but their followers have no incompatible motives to reconcile, and consequently form no exception to the general rule, for which I have been contending.

Roman Catholics in America congregate almost entirely in the cities, and thereby make a greater show, and exercise more influence in proportion to their numbers, than they otherwise would: one reason for this is, that in the rural districts they are generally unable to obtain a regular participation in the rites and ministrations of their church, the population being often too poor to support a priest permanently. In the case of Protestant 175 sects

there exists no such difficulty; in the first place, because they do not attach nearly so much importance to the performance of ministerial services, and also because when a demand arises they have no scruple about supplying it in the easiest and most summary manner: a lawyer, an artizan or labourer, who may happen to possess fluency of speech, or knowledge of the Scriptures, is chosen minister, and immediately considered as qualified to discharge the duties of the sacred function; at the same time there is nothing in the estimation of himself or his congregation (as indeed there should not be) to prevent him from uniting, when necessary, his secular with his religious calling, so that the difficulty of maintenance is easily overcome. I remember a labourer from my father's estate, who had received a good education in one of his schools, telling me that he had often been advised by his American neighbours to adopt the ministerial calling; however, he had sufficient high-church feeling left to decline doing so. Again, there is (as I have before said) so little sympathy felt for the Irish Roman Catholics in America, and they find themselves so generally looked down upon as an inferior Pariah caste, that they naturally prefer living where they find large numbers of their friends and countrymen. The fact, however it be accounted for, is undoubted, that in no part of the States are I 4 176 they found in any numbers as agricultural settlers; while in the cities, as labourers, domestic servants, and indeed tradesmen, they abound to an extent for which I was by no means prepared. Their electioneering influence is of course extremely powerful in these localities, and is to a great extent at the disposal of their ecclesiastical rulers; in New York, especially, their organization is perfect; and Dr. Hughes, their bishop, has probably a greater disposable force at his command than any political leader in the union. Their politics are, generally speaking, “loco-foco,” *i. e.* democratic, as was indeed to be expected from the position which their church has assumed in Ireland (the nursery from which they are supplied); but, at the same time, they stand apart from both parties, holding, as it were, the balance between them, and exercising their influence for the purpose of advancing their own peculiar ends. One of these is sympathy with agitation in Ireland; another is the exclusive possession (for which Bishop Hughes has long been struggling) of part of the general school fund, to be applied under ecclesiastical superintendence for the purposes of

separate education: and nothing can prove the extent of his power more than the fact that he has succeeded in this. The Americans hate every thing that wears the appearance of exclusion or sectarianism, yet they 177 have now virtually consented to give up the principle of syncretism (as it has been called), which has hitherto been their boast; for of course the precedent established in favour of the Roman Catholics must be followed universally if other religious communities make similar demands. Some informality, I believe, in the act has as yet prevented the alteration from being carried into effect; and a strong effort will be made against its ratification in the next legislature: but such is the power of Bishop Hughes, that it is generally supposed he must be victorious again.

I have paid a visit to the Baltimore almshouse, a large building, in a beautiful situation, about three miles from the town, surrounded by 300 acres of land, principally under cultivation, the labourers on which are all paupers. It seems very well conducted,—presenting, in this respect, a favourable contrast to similar institutions in some of the other large towns: the house is clean, orderly and comfortable; and really, with plenty of good food and clothing, occupation, either on the farm, or at any trade which he may be acquainted with, care taken of him when he is sick, and the power to go away when he pleases, the inmate must lead a very satisfactory life; indeed those to whom I spoke admitted it, and said distinctly that they were far better of in point of physical comforts I 5 178 than the generality of *labourers* in the neighbourhood at this moment (a period of distress, be it recollected), not to speak of the slaves. How this must be wrong. Without any wish for harsh tests of destitution, it is surely not too much to say that the industrious labourer, who struggles to maintain himself and his family independently, ought not to see his next-door neighbour, equally able-bodied and capable in every respect, but who prefers the comparative idleness of an almshouse, better off than himself. The principle is false, and in a crowded state of society would be fatal. As it is, though applicants are never rejected, I was surprised to find that the average number of inmates does not quite amount to 600; but the easy access to the West, and the fact that a large proportion of the lowest

class are slaves (who of course are not admitted), accounts for this: about two-thirds of the paupers are native Americans, the rest almost entirely Irish and Germans.

There is another interesting institution here, called the Farm-school. It is a place for agricultural education, supported by private subscriptions: there is a farm of about 300 acres attached to it; and it contains now about forty boys, from twelve to eighteen years old: they are the children of poor people (not *paupers*), such as widows, or men with large families, and are admitted upon application 179 to the directors, who select the most proper objects. The education is almost entirely that of a practical agriculturist, combined with reading, writing, and arithmetic; and the pupils are boarded, lodged, and clothed, during the period of their residence. The only permanent fund is that derived from the farm, which has been purchased for the institution; and it is hoped that after some time (it is now quite a recent establishment) this may be made to pay the expenses. If properly managed, and connected with a religious and moral education, this system might be the means of training a very useful class of citizens; and is infinitely better than the Boston and Philadelphia plans for giving the children of mechanics a superficial acquaintance with the whole circle of arts and sciences. I am sure that the best plan is to educate a child up to, not beyond, the station in life to which he is born. The few who are heaven-born geniuses will make their way in spite of obstacles; and the difficulty of doing so will form the best test of their vocation, and the best discipline for forming their characters and intellects. The opposite, or forcing system, on the other hand, tends to make all the pupils discontented with their position, and persuaded that they can and ought to escape from it immediately; and thus the superior facilities which are afforded to the few who are capable of availing themselves I 6 180 of them are more than counterbalanced by the positive disqualification for their own callings, which a disproportionately good education imposes on the mass.

There are several Englishmen at present in Baltimore, one of them, Lord—, whom the lower class of Americans throng to see as a sort of curiosity, or as though, when his appearance does not correspond with their expectations, there were some enigma to penetrate about him. The idea which many of them entertain of an English lord is,

that he is a sort of feudal Sybarite—something between Sardanapalus and Guy Earl of Warwick; and accordingly they expect to find him, in appearance, a gorgeous being, clothed in purple and fine linen, and requiring the attendance of a small army of servants, —expectations doomed seldom to be realised in these days.

Another of my countrymen here is a gentleman of large fortune, and somewhat advanced in life, who for the last seven years has been living alone among the Indian tribes somewhere near the Rocky Mountains, hunting the buffalo and grisly bear. What fantastic tricks our countrymen do play, in the very wantonness of wealth and self-indulgence, to get rid of the *ennui* and craving for excitement, which they ought to meet by the regular and persevering discharge, of their appointed 181 duties! The energy, courage, self-denial, and capacity of endurance thrown away by a man like this might, if properly directed, make him a name among the benefactors of the earth.

As Maryland is the first slave-state which I have visited, I have of course been much interested in observing and inquiring about the condition and prospects of the negro race, and particularly about the probable success of the plans which have been adopted for colonizing the coast of Africa, by the emigration of free blacks from this country. The subject is universally considered one of immense interest and importance here; and the most thoughtless look forward with feelings of uneasiness and alarm to the period, now apparently approaching, when slavery will disappear from this state, and the population will consist entirely of whites and free blacks. It seems to be admitted by all, that the change which is taking place in the proportions of the different classes of population must, at no distant period, produce that result.* The whole coloured population of Maryland, at the first census, in 1790, was 111,079; it numbered at the last census 151,556: the free population amounted then to

* The principal source from which I have drawn the information upon this subject in the text is the Maryland Colonization Journal.

182 only 8043; it has risen now to 61,937. The proportion of the free coloured population to the whites, in 1790, was one to twenty-seven; it is now about one to five. Excluding the increase of the city of Baltimore, the white population of the State has diminished for the last ten years, and in the same time the free coloured has increased 17 per cent. The coloured population is changing its character from slave to free, and the free are rapidly increasing: the apparently natural result of this must be an ultimate numerical equality between the whites and the free blacks. Now, without entering here into the question of how far amalgamation or social equality between the two races is possible, I will only state that not a single individual in this country believes in such a possibility; and all have therefore been eagerly looking out for some scheme which, by disposing satisfactorily of the free coloured population, may avert the fearful consequences which they apprehend as likely to spring from the causes which I have mentioned.

With such a view the Maryland Colonization Society has been formed; and whatever may be our opinion as to its probable success, the circumstances connected with it, and the nature of its proceedings, are sufficiently interesting to induce me to give a short account of it.

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In the autumn of 1831 the legislature of Maryland appropriated a sum of 200,000 dollars, to be applied under the direction of the Maryland Colonization Society (which was formed and chartered in the same year) to the purpose of transporting the free coloured population from this State, and making suitable provision for them in such places as they might choose for a residence. Soon afterwards it was resolved to establish a colony on the African coast, for the purpose of receiving emigrants exclusively from Maryland. The locality selected was Cape Palmas, a point nearly central, between the mouth of the Niger and those of the Senegal and Gambia. An agent was appointed, emigrants collected, a vessel chartered and provided with necessaries, and in the month of February, 1834, they arrived at Cape Palmas. I will not tire you with details of their difficulties and progress; suffice it to say that they entered into pacific relations with the natives, bought from them

500 square miles of territory, and formed a settlement, which has continued to flourish and increase, though slowly, ever since. It is impossible to over-estimate the courage, wisdom, and good feeling which appears to have characterised the managers of the colony throughout; strange to say, they have continued, on the whole, upon good terms with the natives, notwithstanding 184 the extreme barbarity of the latter: and not the least advantage which the plan holds out is, that it provides a channel through which there is at least a better chance than any other affords of the blessings of Christianity and civilisation penetrating among those savage tribes.

Maryland in Liberia, as it is called, now embraces a territory of about 1000 square miles, extending along the sea-coast about thirty-five miles: the territory is said to be well watered, and the land rich and productive. The number of the colonists amounts now to about 600, all negroes; they have found the climate healthy, and agriculture easy and profitable. The constitution of the colony is copied principally from that of Rhode Island: every officer is oblack; the governor being appointed by the society, the inferior officials elected by the colonists: the physician, a man said to be of considerable attainments, is also a negro. There are two schools in operation, and three considerable missions, employing about forty religious teachers within the limits of the settlement: these have gone out for the purpose of seeking communication with the native tribes. One curious characteristic of the colony is, that it forms an organised “temperance society,”—a fundamental article of its constitution being that no ardent spirits should be admitted within its limits. 185 It is perhaps to this regulation that we are to attribute its remarkable healthiness; in 1841 there were only nine deaths (out of 500 people) and seventeen births.

Under all the circumstances I cannot but look upon this successful experiment, undertaken, as it has been, by one of the smallest states of the Union, and opposed by the two extreme parties of pro-slavery men and abolitionists, as not only most creditable to those concerned in it, but as containing the germ at least of solution for the problem which has occupied the minds of all who have contemplated American futurity,—namely, what is to be done with the blacks. The abolitionists oppose the scheme, as antagonist to their

theory of complete social equality between the races on American ground, and the duty of immediate emancipation: the ultra-slavery men dislike it as professing to exhibit the social and political capabilities of the negro in a manner which seems to militate against *their* theory of his inherent and irremediable incapacity. The former, especially, have devoted their whole energies to frustrating the endeavours of the colonizers; and by working upon the fears of some negroes (as to their fate in Africa) and the hopes of others (as to their prospects here) have succeeded to a 186 great extent in prejudicing the minds of the coloured population.

If the accounts published by the society are not most grossly exaggerated, I am surprised that the negroes do not avail themselves to a greater extent of the advantages held out to them: their position is certainly uncomfortable here (though I think its evils are very much exaggerated); and the only change to which they can look forward is that from their present state to one of hopeless struggle and ultimate expulsion, *or worse* , while either on the coast of Africa or in the British West Indies there seems to be a large field for their exertions, and scope for the accomplishment of all their natural desires. From what I have heard, I confess I should prefer the latter, particularly Jamaica and British Guiana, where the position of the blacks is so favourable (as regards the facility of acquiring property, and the admission to political privileges) as apparently to render unnecessary the removal to Africa, which of course involves, as must be the case with every infant colony in a barbarous country, very considerable dangers and hardships.

The “ *bête noire* ” (literally) of Americans is a population of free blacks. While the negroes are in a state of slavery they reckon upon being able 187 to keep them under efficient control, and at least to provide against the possibility of successful insurrection, by stringent legislative and police regulations; but, above all things, they dread the combination and designs of a class to whose passions and energies emancipation has given a stimulus and scope, while it has removed the possibility of applying effectually the

system of espionage and physical repression, which render any conspiracy among slaves so difficult and uncertain.

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LETTER XXIII. VIRGINIA.

AMERICAN DIPLOMATISTS.—WASHINGTON CITY.—THE POTOMAC.—RAILROAD TO RICHMOND.—RICHMOND.—VIRGINIANS.—CONTRADICTIONS IN THEIR CHARACTER.—UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.—JEFFERSON.—FIELD-SPORTS.—PRICE OF LAND.

—Hill, near Charlotteville, Virginia, November.

I Left Baltimore by railroad, and arrived at Washington at six in the evening. On the way I saw a curious specimen of the mixture of ranks which one so often meets with in this country. On the bench beside me sat Mr. Legare, the attorney-general of the United States; before us were the French minister at Washington and his lady, who have just arrived by the Great Western. Next to Madame P—sat two of the lowest class of American citizens,—perhaps a Maryland slave-driver, and an Irish emigrant in search of work; then came one of the ambassador's suite, a very gentlemanlike young Frenchman, and next to him a maid-servant.

The attorney-general's career appears singular to us, who are accustomed to a more accurate 189 division of labour: he was bred a lawyer, of course, but had very little practice, as may be supposed from his accepting the office of *chargé-d'affaires* at Brussels. While in that capacity he conducted himself so much to the satisfaction of the American people, that on his return he was elected a member of Congress; and having obtained considerable political and parliamentary success, was lately made attorney-general, for which his previous course of life can hardly, one would suppose, have been a very appropriate preparation. He is a very gentlemanlike and agreeable man, and, I think,

the only American I have yet met whom I could not recognise as such by his accent and manner.*

* I regret to say, that since I left America Mr. Legare's career has been suddenly and unexpectedly cut short by death; I have therefore considered myself justified in departing in his case from my usual rule of omitting all the personal observations which I find in my original letters.

There is no diplomatic profession in the American service; a man emerges into an embassy from private life, to which he returns again after his term of service; indeed the appointments are so small as to render a private fortune indispensable to an ambassador who wishes to maintain a position in society at all adequate to his rank. Some of the consulships are far more lucrative; 190 those at Liverpool and Havana are almost the best situations in the appointment of the government.

I suppose you have an idea of what is humorously termed “Washington city;” I can compare it to nothing but a country village which has gone mad, and flung itself in a kind of wild dishevelled way about the fields. A street does not *mean* a street, but simply a line of country where a street ought to be; consequently, if you ask for a person's residence, and are directed (for example) to “21st Street,” you probably find your way, after interminable inquiries and wanderings, to a solitary dwelling, upon a piece of waste land, and by degrees become aware of the fact that the house in question and 21st Street are synonymous. The Capitol, containing the houses of Congress and the rooms appertaining to them, is an imposing structure, situated on a commanding elevation, which looks as if it had been destined for the purpose; and, though perhaps not architecturally correct, has on the whole a very fine effect. The President's house is a handsome and appropriate building, like some of our best town-houses, with a gravelled sweep before it.

There are a few other public buildings dropped about in the neighbourhood, which stand white and staring, as if astonished at their own unnatural 191 position: altogether, it

requires no ordinary effort of abstraction to recollect, while at Washington, that one is in the capital city of a great nation. I had the honour of a reception from the President, who very kindly received me at once, without ceremony or delay, when he understood from the letter of introduction which I sent to him that I was a foreigner. Of course, as his time is so much occupied, I made but a very short visit. The President has only 25,000 dollars a year, so that, as he is obliged to entertain a good deal, you may suppose it is not a “money-making concern,” though his style of living is by no means equal to that of an English country gentleman. However, the immense influence and patronage which he enjoys make the office a most worthy object of ambition; and I am by no means surprised at the intense excitement which the election, and even the anticipation of it at two years' distance, produces.

There have been several duels in the neighbourhood of Washington lately; the last between two boys at the Naval School, who fired six shots each, and did not desist till one of them was shot through the neck: he is still in a precarious state. A young naval officer, whom I met at Washington, told me that he called, with some others, upon the secretary of the navy, to request him to take measures for stopping such a 192 murderous practice among the students; and that the answer they received was, that he had no objection to it at all, so long as they only fought among themselves, and did not shoot citizens.

After having seen the Capitol, and the Patent Office, and all the stereotyped shows, and received (as usual) the kindest attention from those to whom I brought letters, I started at six o'clock A. M. on the 13th, per steam-boat, on my way to Richmond. We ran for fifty miles down the Potomac, a fine broad river, with cultivated banks, and some country-houses on them. I landed at Potomac Creek, and proceeded by stage nine miles to Fredericksburg, over a road celebrated by Dickens in his Notes. The “black driver,” whom he describes, is highly indignant at the part he is made to play as hero in the scene, and strongly denies the truth of the representation. The road is bad, but not so bad as I expected, or as others that I have seen. The plan adopted in Virginia for keeping roads in order is this: the road commissioners call out the “ *posse comitatus* ,” *i. e.* all the

labour of the country, slave and free, once a year, when they make a show of performing the necessary repairs; but as you may suppose, in a country where stoned roads are unknown, and the route is merely a track, more or less carefully levelled, in the sand or clay, long 193 before the end of the year there is but little appearance of the mending left.

From Fredericksburg to Richmond the fare is five dollars, the same as that from Boston to Albany, though the distance is only sixty-three miles (instead of 200); and a similar disproportion exists, I am told, almost universally between northern and southern prices. The country through which we passed is not remarkable in its features; much of it bears the marks of former cultivation, but has now, as is the case with a great part of all the Eastern States, returned to its original wood-covered condition, the population having been tempted to the westward by finer soil and climate. Thus the tendency of the population in the Eastern States has been to concentrate itself in towns, to become commercial or manufacturing, and to depend more and more upon the West for their supplies of raw produce. The agriculture here appears worse, and more slovenly, than in the North, though indeed everywhere in America, from causes which I have before alluded to, it produces the same impression, more or less, upon an Englishman.

Richmond is a dirty town, presenting the appearance, so unusual in America, of retrogression and decay. It is finely situated on two precipitous hills, the bases of which are washed by the VOL. II. K 194 James River: the site reminds me of Edinburgh. It was on this river, some ten miles further down, that the first settlement was made in North America, about the year 1607. There are now no remains of James Town, the original seat of the colony. On the morning after my arrival, being Sunday, I went to the “Monumental Church,” which was built as a monument over the spot where some years ago a theatre was burned, and hundreds of people perished. The great exports of this place are tobacco and flour, for the latter of which it is particularly celebrated. It seems that the wheat grown in these southern latitudes contains more *gluten* , and is consequently more valued, than the produce of a colder climate; and this is nearly the extreme point to the southward where it is grown: south of Virginia, rice takes its place. The weather had become very

cold before I left Pennsylvania; but at Richmond I found a cloudless sky, a fine warm sunshine, and brilliant moonlight again. There was a good deal of rain as I came down the Potomac, at which I felt an almost instinctive discontent, so long had I been unaccustomed to the sight of a shower.

Dr. Lardner was lecturing at Richmond while I was there; but I hear he has not been successful, and that he is not anywhere admitted into society.

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After spending two nights at Richmond, I started to pay a visit to an American gentleman, distinguished by his abilities and political position, to whom I had brought a letter of introduction. He resides on his own plantation, in the interior of Virginia; and it required the greater part of a day to get there, travelling by railroad and stage. Nothing could exceed the hospitality with which I was received, or the kindness with which my host sacrificed his valuable time to satisfy my curiosity and promote the object of my visit; but I must not forget my “cordon” against all personalities, whether complimentary or otherwise.

I remained four days with Mr.—, and was very much interested in all that I saw of Virginia and its inhabitants. For the first time since my arrival in the States I find myself in a thoroughly agricultural country, and among a population possessed of rural tastes and habits. In even the country parts of New England, the people are much more commercial than agricultural in spirit and character, and look upon land (as I said before) in the light of an investment, not of a home; hardly any one above the rank of actual tillers of the ground knows or cares anything about farming or gardening. On the contrary, almost every man, whether he be lawyer, merchant, or simply planter, in Virginia, is a proprietor of land, and takes an K 2 196 interest in its cultivation* ; in fat most of them derive their whole income from the produce of their farms, which consists principally of wheat, tobacco, and Indian corn. Some of them sell to the amount of 10,000 or 15,000 dollars'-worth every year, after providing for their household and the subsistence of their slaves; and though this wealthier class is necessarily diminishing under the influence of the American law of

succession, there is still a considerable number who live in a kind of patriarchal manner, not calculating and making money, but, *soluti fœnore* , enjoying a rustic plenty, following the sports of the field, and exercising a liberal hospitality. These maintain the superiority of a country to a city life, a position which appears as paradoxical to a New Englander as it would to a Frenchman. There seems, as far as I can judge, to be no very friendly feeling entertained among the Virginian planters towards the Northern States: they abhor and dread the abolition doctrines professed in the latter, and express much contempt for the money-making habits and propensity to overreach which is vulgarly attributed to the Yankee. character; always expressing

* It is remarkable that Jefferson includes the predominance of agricultural pursuits among the indispensable conditions to the safety and success of a democratic organization.

197 peculiar solicitude that the two “types” should not be confounded by a foreigner, so as to make Virginians responsible for “Yankee notions.” They have, moreover, all the aristocratic tone which is natural to their position as a privileged caste, and which strikes us so forcibly, and, at first sight, so paradoxically, among the democratic nations of antiquity. They predict all sorts of evils to the North from their universal suffrage and the supremacy of the mob. In Virginia there is a limitation of the franchise, even among the whites, a property-qualification being required; and the voting is open, not by the ballot, which is stigmatized here as an unmanly and underhand mode of proceeding. They even seem to like talking of themselves as the “cavaliers” of the Union, and of recalling the origin of their States' *soubriquet* of the “old dominion.” On the whole I have been more struck than I expected to be with the difference between the northern and the southern people, and am surprised at the acrimony with which they appear to speak of the matters upon which their respective opinions or interests clash.

Notwithstanding what I have said of the aristocratic propensities of the Virginians, the “democratic” *party* has a large majority in the State. Jefferson's influence was all-powerful while he lived; and his memory is canonized among them K 3 198 still. Certainly he must have possessed to a great extent the faculty of attaching as well as of governing men,

or he would never have left so deep and lasting an impress of his spirit on the American mind. I think, while we view with just abhorrence many of his principles and actions, we have not generally done justice to his genius and endowments in Europe. It is difficult to imagine a greater contrast than that between the practical ability and good sense which he exhibited in the conduct of affairs, and the preposterous absurdity and wildness of his speculations in philosophy and abstract politics.

One day during my visit, my host drove me in his carriage to Charlotteville, to see the university of Virginia. It was founded by Jefferson, whose place, Monticello, is close to the town; and so great a favourite was it of his, that in the inscription which he wrote for his tomb he is called “the Author of the Declaration of Independence, and the Founder of the University of Virginia.”

The plan of the college buildings is very singular and grotesque, presenting specimens of every known (and unknown) order, and principally remarkable for a superabundance of colouring, produced by very red brick walls, and very white painted pillars and cornices. The professors, to 199 several of whom I was introduced, struck me as intelligent and well informed; and I was sorry to have so short a time for improving my acquaintance with them. The plan of instruction pursued is this: There are a certain number of professors in ancient and modern languages, and in natural philosophy, &c., each of whom gives a diploma to every student who passes through the course of study of his class: those who obtain diplomas from every professor are entitled to the degree of master of arts. Very few of the students, however, attain to this, most of them being content with one or more of the class-courses in the selection, of which they have their option: not more than one in twenty: or thirty takes the degree. As usual, I found that classics were very unpopular, and that not more than one-eighth of the students were in the classical class, *i. e.* received any instruction in ancient literature. All the students board and lodge in the college buildings; there are licensed hotels belonging to the establishment for their accommodation. The cost of board, instruction, and “extras” of all kinds, is about 500 dollars a year; and the course, if a boy wishes to become M. A., requires about four years. There axe now 160 students,

a much smaller number than usual. No attempt is made K 4 200 to exercise discipline or moral superintendence* ; instruction, not education, being the object, according to Mr. Jefferson's theory, who, in this as in most other things, appears to have been the type, or rather exaggeration, of the distinctively American peculiarities. One of his axioms was, that it is good for a youth to be left to himself as early and as much as possible, in order to encourage precocity of development. Since his death (for he would never have allowed any thing to be introduced which savoured of religion) a kind of chaplaincy has been established upon a curious principle of what has been called “quadrangular orthodoxy:” the four most numerous religious bodies in the State provide a minister each every four years; so that the service is performed by a Baptist one year, an Independent the next, a Methodist the third, and an “Episcopalian” the fourt. This is syncretism with a vengeance.

* I remember holding a conversation with the principal of one of the American universities upon the subject of the difference between the German and English systems of university education, and their results. He said there could be no doubt of the superiority possessed by the Germans in *communicating instruction;* but that in *forming the mind and character* the advantage was, as clearly, upon our side. The true test of a system of education consists in the inquiry, not whether it administers the greatest possible amount of knowledge, but whether it trains, on the whole, the best and greatest men.

201 After seeing the university we drove to the house of my host's brother, where we spent the night.

To my great surprise I found in the morning that there had been a heavy fall of snow during the night, a severity of weather for which I was not prepared in the middle of November, and in about the latitude of the Barbary coast (36° north).

The country about Charlotteville, which is situated at the base of the Blue Mountains, must be very pretty in summer, for the valleys are richly cultivated, and the hills clothed to the top with forest. At this season, however, when part is covered with snow, and all beside is leafless and brown, it looked very cheerless; and as the fences are mere wooden

railings, a tract of arable land, when the crop is removed, presents a bare and monotonous aspect. Mr. Jefferson's house, now in the possession of a captain of the United States navy, of the name of Levy, is on the very summit of one of the lower hills belonging to the Blue Mountain chain; and a more extraordinary and original situation it is impossible to conceive.

On our return homewards we stopped to look at a cotton-factory, erected upon the river Rivanna, where about one hundred people are employed. The operatives come in from the surrounding country, and board at houses near the mill: the K 5 202 salary of the girls is 5½ dollars a month (without board), and of the men from 8 to 12 dollars, which is by no means a high rate of wages. Virginia seems well adapted for the enjoyment of field-sports; and they are pursued to a considerable extent by the planters. I have not had time or opportunity to try my own luck,—indeed I was so disappointed in my expectations of sport to the northward, that I have left my gun at New York. There seem to be a good number of quails and hares, and there are deer in the mountains; they also hunt foxes with dogs and on horseback, an amusement which I thought was peculiar to Great Britain and her dependencies. I have even seen some good dogs, pointers and dwarf fox-hounds; but though every body rides, I think their horses are in general decidedly inferior to those of the North, particularly about Vermont. There are great numbers of opossums and racoons, but they are considered as sport and food for negroes only.

Land immediately about Charlotteville is worth from thirty to forty dollars an acre, but in the country parts (taking my present locality as a standard) it is not worth above fifteen: one acre produces nearly fifteen bushels of wheat, which is now worth but eighty-five cents a bushel at Richmond, 203 and hardly seventy here. For a long time there was a large emigration from Virginia westward; but lately, I am told, the low price to which land had fallen has tended to check this, and has even tempted many farmers from New York to sell at home and come here. K 6

LETTER XXIV. VIRGINIA.

SLAVERY.—CONDITION OF SLAVES.—EFFECTS OF ABOLITIONISM.—CONDITION OF LABOURERS IN EUROPE.—MR. CLAY'S SPEECH IN OHIO.—PROSPECTS OF THE NEGRO RACE.—PRACTICAL EVILS.—THEIR REMEDIES.—SOUTHERN FEELING ON THE SUBJECT.—ELECTIONS.—JEALOUSY OF ENGLAND.

New York, November.

After leaving—Hill, I returned by “stage” and railroad* to a solitary inn, where the Gordonsville branch strikes the great Southern Line, and where I was compelled to pass the night. Here I met an American naval officer, who was also a Virginian planter, and with whom I had a great deal of conversation upon slavery and politics. So much has been written of late upon slavery by persons holding every shade of opinion, that any indulgence on my part in long lucubrations upon the subject would be superfluous and fatiguing; I will, however, venture to make a few observations upon what I have seen in Virginia. In the first place, I must acknowledge myself to have been

* Where can the traffic for such a railroad come from? I verily believe the Americans would, if Canada belonged to them, run a railroad to the North Pole.

205 disappointed at the physical condition of the negroes, as far as it appears, at least of the field-labourers. I was prepared for great moral and intellectual inferiority in the slaves; but I expected that, so far as clothing, lodging, and feeding were concerned, I should see nothing of which they could complain. Such is not the case: both in Richmond and in the country they presented what would, not only amongst the white American peasantry, but any where else, be called a very miserable appearance. Of food, I believe, they have enough; indeed, it is always the interest of the master to keep the working slaves upon a full diet: but their clothing and lodging appear to me no better than what one finds among the poorest labourers in the worst parts of Europe,—two or more families living in one hut, and that of the worst kind, and the children being generally naked; the effect of the whole

being aggravated (no doubt) by what appears to an unaccustomed eye the unnatural and deformed shape and features of the race, especially of the aged among them. I am inclined, too, to judge very unfavourably of their moral and religious condition: most of the slaves who profess any religion are Baptists or Methodists* ; but, generally

* I am happy to see that in the State of South Carolina the church is apparently making considerable efforts to bring the coloured population within her pale. In the Report presented to the Diocesan Convention of that State, for the year 1842, I find a return of 1314 coloured communicants, and 1632 coloured children attending the Sunday schools of the Church. As it is to be presumed that a large majority of the latter are slaves, the statement affords a gratifying proof that *all* slave-owners are not hostile to the religious instruction of their negroes. The number of slaves in South Carolina is (according to the last census) 327,038; that of the free blacks 8,276.

206 speaking, they have but little feeling or knowledge on the subject. It is absolutely forbidden by law to teach them reading or writing; and masters will not, I am told, generally allow of much communication between them and religious teachers. “Those ministers are all abolitionists in disguise,” said a planter to me; “I would not let one of them come among my slaves.” They are seldom married by a priest, nor do many of them appear to attach any idea of sacredness or even permanence to the connexion. When a man is tired of a woman he leaves her. Those slaves. Who are brought up as domestic servants are much better off, and many of them become greatly attached to their masters, who, of course, instruct them in their moral and religious duties. In towns they are subjected to strict police regulations, not being allowed to go out after dark without a permit, or to associate in large numbers for any purpose, even for religious duties. All 207 this severity, as well as the anti-instruction law, is of late adoption, and consequent, as I am told, upon the efforts of the abolitionists to promote disaffection among them.

In 1822 a project of insurrection was discovered in South Carolina, according to which 10,000 negroes were to have risen, sacked Charleston, murdered all the whites, and sailed for St. Domingo, according to the planter's version of the story. Twenty-four of

the ringleaders were hanged; and such precautions are now taken as to render an outbreak highly improbable. About the same time there was an insurrection in Virginia, after the suppression of which the question of providing for the emancipation of slaves throughout the State was brought before the legislature of Virginia, and received in a very encouraging manner: Mr. Randolph's speech on the occasion is one of the boldest and best that I ever read. Just then the Abolition Societies sprung up in the North, and at once the Virginians took fire: “No foreign intervention! no concession with respect to southern institutions!” was the cry: coercion, precaution, restrictive laws, and police regulations, were unanimously resolved upon; and from that moment it became almost treason to talk of emancipation.

Another circumstance which surprised me was, 208 the chronic apprehension which appears to prevail of a negro insurrection. I had always fancied that this was an image of terror conjured up by the warm imagination of abolitionists, who, having settled that the slaves *ought* to rebel, went on to infer that they would; and, moreover, that the planters must always be expecting that they would: just as many of our friends in England imagine that every Irish gentleman always goes about with loaded pistols, never ventures out after nightfall, and barricades doors and windows every evening, so as to repel the too probable attack which is to be made before morning. Knowing how we Irish laugh at such ideas, except in peculiar circumstances, I felt sure that I should find the American planters and their wives laughing at similar terrors: and I was quite surprised to find that the contrary is the case; and that even here, where the whites are superior in numbers as well as intelligence and organisation, there seems a constant feeling “ *incedendi per ignes.* ” How much stronger must such a feeling be in Carolina and Mississippi!

On the whole, I came away decidedly more impressed with a conviction of the evils of slavery than when I entered the slave-states. I do not, however, look upon the permanent nature of the tie which exists between master and slave as a 209 hardship, nor upon the impossibility of rising in the world under which the latter labours as by any means an intolerable evil: on the contrary, I am inclined to think the modification of the same

system which prevailed all over Europe during the middle ages* , and which now lingers in the Selavonic portion of it, was in many very important respects superior to the free and independent position which (in theory at least) employer and workmen hold with respect to each other with us. It is a serious question, whether the independence be not, practically, almost entirely on one side; and whether, as respects the masses, the advantages derived from the nominal command of their own time and labour be not more than counterbalanced by the loss of that protection and sympathy from their superiors which a more permanent tie engendered, by the wear and tear arising from intense competition in the labour-market, by the anxiety attendant upon an uncertain future, and by the too frequent destitution of sickness and old age, or (its only alternative) the public workhouse.

* I have no doubt at all of the superior advantages enjoyed by the English “villein,” who became afterwards a copyholder, and whose (qualified) property in the soil was as fully recognised as his owner's, over the modern manufacturing or agricultural labourer.

I am not inclined, then, to denounce the *principle* 210 of the system; nor should I see much reason for wishing it discarded, if the practical hardships attendant upon its operation in the Western hemisphere could be dealt with apart from abolition. These hardships appear to me to be incidental to the distinction of races far more than to the relation of classes: as far as I can judge, they are unknown in the East, among either Mahometans or Hindoos; and will, I think, be found to result chiefly from two causes: first, the mingled contempt and abhorrence which the white feels for the black, whom he can hardly bring himself to regard as a fellow-being, and the object of human sympathies; and, secondly, the attitude of hostility and self-defence, as it were, as regards his slave, into which the mind of the master is thrown by the modern theories which prevail upon the subject, and their presumed effect. These causes produce, to a lamentable extent, severity of treatment, and indifference to the welfare of slaves; and as, I fear, they are of a permanent nature, we can hardly hope to see more than a mitigation of their effects. I should therefore deem hardly any sacrifice too great, short of actual civil war, or the disorganisation of society, in order

to get rid of slavery, which I believe to be, as now in operation, a crying and grievous evil: and upon this head I entertain, in a great measure, the same sentiments 211 with my late host, and many other well-meaning and intelligent Southrons, sentiments which were lately well expressed by Mr. Clay, in a speech which he made to the abolitionists at Ohio.

He acknowledges that slavery is a great evil, that a country can hardly prosper under its influence, and that interest as well as morality would counsel its extinction, if a practicable and safe method for effecting it could be discovered. He maintains, however, that deportation and abolition must go hand in hand; that it would be impossible for the two races to remain quietly in each other's presence, where the blacks have the majority, without an established legal superiority in the whites. If it were otherwise, and the present democratic institutions continued, the consequence (Mr. Clay says) would be, that while the property, intelligence, pride of race, and consciousness of superiority in every respect, were on the part of the whites, (which for *a long time* , at any rate, would obviously be the case,) the whole political power would be in the hands of the black majority. The anomaly would exist, though less extensively, where they have not the actual numerical superiority. The races can never (it is alleged) amalgamate* ; nature forbids it: and it is

* Is this quite certain? We see that practically a very considerable “amalgamation” takes place; and it is evident that if natural causes do not prevent illicit connexion, they will not, under different institutions, prevent alliances from being contracted on equal terms. At the same time I am inclined to think that there is more than prejudice in the feeling of abhorrence with which all whites of a refined nature (especially women, among whom there is hardly an exception) regard the idea of admixture with those of a different colour. It would, at any rate, take centuries to overcome such a feeling sufficiently for the purposes of politicians.

The force of the planters' arguments, as stated in the text, are somewhat weakened by the example of peaceable results, following emancipation, which the British West Indies

afford, even after making due allowance for the effects produced by the “ *prestige*” of British military power, and the less popular nature of our institutions.

212 obvious that such a state of things could not last, but must produce a collision, which would be fatal to the weaker party.

That production would be to a great extent diminished, so far as it is dependant on negro labour, the example of St. Domingo and the British colonies would seem to establish undeniably; and though this consideration cannot be urged to the philanthropist with the same force as the former, yet it is an argument which, with the individuals concerned, would, generally speaking, be decisive. In the northern slave-states, however, I believe the conviction that free labour is the cheapest is gradually, though very slowly, effecting its natural results; the number of slaves in Virginia, the district of Columbia, and Maryland, 213 having decreased, and in North Carolina having remained stationary, during the last ten years. It is probable that in these States, as well as Kentucky and Tennessee, the maintenance of the institution is more the result of feeling than of self-interest; and, ultimately, I have no doubt that the latter will prevail, and that the whole existing slave-population will be thrown into the unhealthy southern country, *where only blacks can work* , and where, consequently, the institution will never be abolished but by external compulsion. If such a movement should be accompanied or followed by a dissolution of the Union, the final catastrophe will probably be a revolution in those southern states after the manner of Hayti, and the exclusive possession of them by the black race. This, however, is a matter of vague and remote speculation.

The free blacks even now constitute a worse population than the slaves; indeed, under every aspect the presence of the coloured race in the same country with the whites is a bitter curse to it* : and we must not forget that Virginia owes this to our government; for bill after bill, prohibiting the slave-trade, was passed by the Virginian legislature, and negatived by the crown; so that we

* In Canada the runaway slaves are growing up into a population, which we may, at some future time, find it troublesome to deal with.

214 have no right to taunt her with the effects of the slave-trade, except so far as the continued existence of them contradicts her ultra-democratic theories, or so far as the evil which attends them is practically remediable.

I cannot think that the possibility of remedying practical grievances has received by any means sufficient attention, either from the abolitionists or from the moderate and rational slave-owners; and till the latter show a determination to grapple with the question they can hardly complain of the suspicions cast on their sincerity, when they profess a dislike of slavery in the abstract.

The chief grievances under which the slaves labour are the want of education, the liability to be sold individually (so as to separate families), and the absence of protection for their *legal rights.* It is of no avail to say that a master may be punished for ill-treating his slave, if the rules of evidence and the composition of tribunals render the possibility of such punishment merely nominal. When we consider that *a black man's evidence is not admissible against a white* , and recollect the tendency of the whites to stand by each other, whether they be judges, jurymen, or witnesses, we can hardly be surprised at the fact that a black never gains a cause against a white. Then, again, no considerations of expediency can justify 215 those who are in power, if they forbid a provision for the education of immortal beings, or permit the disruption of domestic ties.* To do so is absolutely and *per se* criminal, and should be dealt with quite independently of the question of abolition. Yet I see no symptoms of its being so considered. If the slave were to be made “astrictus glebæ, provided with moral and religious training, and suffered to give evidence in court like another man, I for one could reconcile myself easily to the continuance of servitude, and feel but little sympathy” with abolition doctrines.

* How is it possible to impress upon a negro the sacred obligation of marriage, and to rebuke him for his laxity in this respect by urging the precept “not to put asunder what God has joined,” while the laws of the country are (very practically) teaching him a precisely opposite lesson, by sending (on the bankruptcy, or death, or at the caprice of his owner) himself to Maryland, his wife to Texas, and his children to Missouri, never to meet again?

The abolitionists have, I see, been making considerable advances; the “abolition ticket,” as it is called, having increased from 7000 to 26,000 within the last two years. Their game is simply to show their strength and annoy both parties, hoping by degrees to gather strength to return candidates pledged to their own opinions: in many instances they have succeeded in defeating the election altogether, that is, preventing either 216 candidate from obtaining the requisite amount of votes. Their proceedings seem to assume each year a more serious aspect, and to produce a more bitter feeling in the South. I have just seen in a Virginian paper, not a week old, a threat of retaliation, by “kidnapping the leaders, and carrying them to the South, to be treated according to their deserts;” and the other day a bookseller was fined 1000 dollars in Charleston for selling Dr. Channing's last discourse upon slavery. But I confess that I see no reason for apprehending a dissolution of the Union from such differences; both parties feel so strongly that union is essential to their common interests: and this is the last age and the last country in the world in which tangible interests are likely to be sacrificed for the purpose of carrying out a principle.

Jefferson said, many years ago, “Nothing is more clearly written in the book of destiny than the emancipation of the blacks.” It may be so, but at present it appears as far off as when he spoke; nor do I see any prospect of it, except through the agency of *a foreign invasion, or a dissolution of the Union.*

But every thing in America is so extraordinary, so unprecedented, so unlike all that has hitherto occurred in the history of mankind, that he would 217 be a bold prophet who

ventured to predict, with any degree of confidence, the course of events which is awaiting her. And so I leave this momentous subject.

The elections have been very unfavourable to the Whigs: there will be a large democratic majority in the next Congress; and the democrats are also sure of carrying their president, unless there be another reaction in public opinion before 1844, or unless they split upon the choice of a candidate. Van Buren will probably be the man; for though he is not very highly thought of in point of ability, he is on the other hand obnoxious to no section of the party, and a most dexterous politician, and he made the most of his opportunities while in power to conciliate popularity. His most formidable (democratic) rival is Mr. Calhoun, a man of infinitely greater talents, but ultra in every thing, free trade, slavery, and states' rights to the extent of the “nullification” power; his prominent advocacy, indeed, of the latter doctrine, which, except in South Carolina, is very unpopular, will probably be fatal to his chance of success. Though pledged to free trade, and so far to a line of policy favourable to our interests, his bias is very anti-English, on account of our “abolition” doings; and nobody held a more VOL. II. L 218 warlike language than he did upon the affair of the Creole.

It is not uninstructive, by-the-by, to hear foreigners talk of the questions upon which their governments and our own have come into collision. We always talk as though we had been humbled, degraded, betrayed, and as though the name of England had become a by-word for weakness and cowardice. Most Frenchmen, Germans, and Americans, on the other hand, are fully persuaded that all the prime ministers in the world (particularly Webster and Guizot) are our paid agents; that English travellers are all political spies;—in short, that the great danger of the age is the establishment of universal empire by Great Britain. They believe that this is the end and object of her policy, which has hitherto been but too successful: that if she seems to concede for a moment, it is only “reculer pour mieux sauter;” and that consequently the first duty and interest of all nations is to guard against her encroachments before it be too late. The prevalence of these notions, absurd as they are, may at least induce us to hesitate before we fall into the opposite absurdity of

laying it down as a matter of course, that the influence of England has dwindled to that of a second-rate power.

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I returned by Washington to Baltimore in one day. The nine miles of *staging* , "immortalised" by Dickens, has now been superseded by the opening of a railroad, which completes the entire line line of steam communication between Maine and Georgia. L 2

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LETTER XXV. NEW YORK.

JOURNEY TO NEW YORK.—AMERICAN GREENACRE.—FIRES.—ANGLO-AMERICAN CHURCH.—ITS PROGRESS.—PROSPECTS OF INCREASE.—INFLUENCES WHICH ASSIST AND OPPOSE IT.—ITS ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM.—EXAMPLE AFFORDED BY ECCLESIASTICAL CONVENTIONS IN AMERICA.—CONCLUSION.

New York, November.

I had been invited by a Baltimore acquaintance, who is a keen sportsman, to go down the Chesapeake with him and shoot canvass-backed ducks, which are innumerable here; but unfortunately I was detained in Virginia a day or two longer than I had anticipated, and my time is now so limited that I could not spare a day for the expedition. After remaining one day more at Baltimore I retraced my steps as far as Burlington, where I spent a night at the house of the Bishop of New Jersey. The next day he and I travelled together to New York; and I am now established again at the Astor House.

All the world at New York has been talking for the last week of an extraordinary event which has happened in the gaol. An American 221 Greenacre, of the name of Colt, a man of respectable station and connections in society, was to have been hung for a singularly cruel and coldblooded murder. On the day appointed for his execution he was *married!* — in his cell—to a woman with whom he had lived, and immediately afterwards committed

suicide by cutting his throat. Almost at the same moment the prison took fire, and great part of it is burned down. An execution is a very rare event here; and the people were greatly excited by the anticipation of it: you may imagine, therefore, the sensation which such a combination of extraordinary incidents has produced. It sounds more like the catastrophe of a melo-drame than a scene of real life.

The police of this city is very defective, burglaries and incendiary fires prevailing to an extent unknown in any other civilised town; indeed, there is hardly a morning on which the papers do not announce a burglary of the night before: and detections, I am told, are rare in proportion. The fire-engine system (a most important one where there are fires every night) is curious and characteristic, being entirely carried on by voluntary associations of young men, who have their officers, and meetings, and rules, quite independent of executive control, and, of course, without pay. It is an affair of great interest and emulation, each L 3 222 company or club being anxious to be first at the fire, and to be distinguished by its exertions; indeed, to such an extent is this carried, that it has sometimes led to quarrels and collisions, There is, as you may suppose, abundance of energy, but, I should think, little subordination or method. An engine is passing my window at this moment; twenty or thirty are at the ropes; shouting and cheering each other as they run; and the fire-bell is ringing for the second time since sunset.

Appleton, the ecclesiastical bookseller of New York, tells me there is a great increase of interest taken within the last ten years in theological subjects; and that they are now reprinting in this country, to meet the demand, numbers of our religious works, particularly those of the older English divines, and of such among the moderns as have most caught their spirit. There can be no doubt of the immense progress which the Anglo-American church has made within the last twenty years; and the ratio of its increase has been becoming regularly accelerated: it is now, in short, the most “fashionable sect” in the country, and includes a laxge proportion of the wealthier and more civilised classes, I will not say in its communion, but among its congregations But, while we thankfully acknowledge this gratfying 223 fact, we must not forget two considerations: one, the

extraordinary depression under which the Church laboured during the early part of the present century; and the other, the *mode* (to use the schoolmen's term) in which a large proportion of her nominal members receive her doctrines.

About twenty-five years ago the Anglo-American church did not number more than 300 clergy, and less than one-fortieth part of the population of the United States, among her members. In the war of Independence, almost all the members of the church (a remarkable and instructive fact) had taken part with the mother-country; and after its close many of them emigrated to Great Britain and Canada. Such as remained were naturally looked upon with a suspicion and disfavour, which were increased by their continued intercourse with England for the purpose of obtaining orders, and by their adoption, in 1786, of the Anglican Liturgy and Articles. Other causes contributed to keep the church in a depressed position, as respects numbers and influence, for a considerable period after the Revolution; but it was natural to suppose, as they were not of a permanent nature, that, sooner or later, a reaction must take place, and that she would regain, to a great extent, the ground which she had lost. Such reaction we have now, thank God! witnessed: L 4 224 at this moment there are twenty-seven bishops belonging to her communion—two in New York, and one in each of the other States; and upwards of 1200 clergy. The number of the congregations is not to be ascertained with any degree of accuracy, on account of the unfixed habits of the people in this respect; but it is supposed that they have increased in an equal ratio with the clergy, *i. e.* quadrupled within twenty-five years.*

* Yet their number is now hardly greater than that of the Universalists!

It is difficult for an Englishman to realise the extreme laxity of American opinion upon these subjects, and the indifference with which the laity will adopt or depart from any given system of religious doctrines and ordinances. Numbers, especially among the more wealthy and educated classes, openly profess to belong to no particular church, at the same time assuming to “Christians,” *i. e.* to believe in the inspiration of the Bible; while of those who hold the truth, a great part hold it accidentally, and, as it were, *heretically* (*i.*

e. upon a principle of a [???]##[???][???][???]), holding at the same time that they might just as lawfully and as safely have come to an opposite conclusion, and that a difference of opinion in religious matters no way differs in kind from a difference of opinion as to the comparative merits of Gothic or 225 Grecian architecture, or German and Italian music. It is difficult to illustrate the prevailing tone on this subject by examples; but nobody can have associated or conversed much with Americans of all denominations without being very forcibly struck by it: it colours (often, as it were, unconsciously) the thoughts and language of the whole people. The American mind is essentially latitudinarian, and has a natural repugnance to any thing which affects an exclusive or dogmatical character. Like the ancient Romans, who would receive any number of *additional* divinities into their Pantheon, provided they did not interfere with those who were there already, the Americans will admit any sect to be Christian, Protestant, and orthodox, (all which terms are generally considered as synonymous), which receives the Christian Scriptures, and any doctrinal scheme which it thinks may be deduced therefrom, so long as it allows all others to be equally right who do the same. Intellectually such “religionists” as these are far more formidable, because more consistent, than those who earnestly and believingly contend for an erroneous system; but, morally, their condition is infinitely less hopeful: and I look upon the preponderance of their sentiments as a very unfavourable prognostic for the progress of Catholic views in America. L 5

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Again: the tone and spirit of *democracy* is essentially opposed to Catholic views. I do not for a moment mean to assert that it is irreconcileable with them, (still less do I, as a Catholic, maintain that any one form of government is of immutable obligation as peculiarly conformable to the Divine will); I know that a person may draw a clear, logical distinction between theological and political matters, as lying in distinct, incommensurable provinces; and that, while in the former he is humble, childlike, submissive to authority, patient of mystery, more ready to believe than to argue, and continually looking out of himself for assistance and support, in the latter, he may be independent, self-relying, a sturdy stickler

for his rights, and a contemner of the powers that be, unless they prove to his entire satisfaction that they ought to be. I know that these diversities of mental action coexist in some men, and that many more imagine that they coexist in themselves; but nothing will convince me that *in general* it will be so, or that *a nation* will ever be characterised at the same time by strong practical republicanism and a faithful reception of the Catholic system of theology.*

* American churchmen are fond of saying that their theological opinions make no difference in their politics. They must excuse me for doubting the fact. I know that among a pretty extensive acquaintance I never met but one who had adopted decided high-church views, and who retained the slightest tendency towards ultra-democracy in politics. I admit that a man may be perfectly sincere and strictly logical in holding both; but so it is, that they do not. Indeed, I have generally observed that churchmen of the Anglo-American communion take but little part or interest, generally speaking, in politics. They seem to feel instinctively that, under existing circumstances, they would not be in their element if they did.

227 The reception by a people of any religious system will (humanly speaking) depend chiefly upon the prevalent habits of thought and feeling which exist among them; for our reason is biassed by our affections, and our religious views are developed far more by means of a moral than an intellectual process. The religious system, when established, will itself react, no doubt, and modify to a very important extent the national character; but where it has to make its own way, its chances of success, according to our limited perception of the relation of causes and effects, depend, not only upon the truth and beauty of its doctrines, but upon the temper of mind which, as it were, meets them: and, therefore, I do not see much prospect at present of any great or permanent progress being made by the church among the mass of the American people. Independently of metaphysics, indeed, there are great obstacles in her way, from L 6 228 that jealousy which has always been felt towards her, as well on account of her Anglican propensities, and the recently-revived ecclesiastical intercourse between the mother and the daughter

church, as also on account of the alleged aristocratic character and pretensions of her members.*

* It is remarkable, and well worth our serious attention (however the fact may be accounted for), that the American, as well as the English Church, seems to exhibit a tendency to become *the Church of the rich.* It would seem as though the uncultivated mind required more animal excitement (I do not use the word in a bad sense) than our sober and simple ritual affords; an excitement which the Roman Church administers by means of gorgeous ceremonial, and Protestant sects, generally, by long and vehement discourses, extempore prayer, and the promotion of that active individualism which pervades their whole economy. On the other hand, we may fairly challenge comparison between the effects produced by the English church-system in forming the minds of the upper ranks with those which are observable in *any other* country. I have no doubt whatever that, as regards religious faith and practice, our aristocratic and professional classes are, as a whole, in a far more satisfactory state than those of the Roman Catholic or Protestant States of either Continent.

In considering, however, the probable fortunes of the American Church, I would observe that although the circumstances of the country appear on the whole discouraging to her friends, there are points of view in which they present a more favourable aspect.

It must, I think, be acknowledged that instincts and tendencies exist in the human mind which a 229 democratic state of society cannot adequately meet or satisfy, but which democratic institutions, however they may repress or modify, can never universally eradicate. In such a state of society it may therefore be expected, that those in whom the dispositions to which I have alluded predominate will cluster round, and cling to, the one institution which offers to their peculiar habits of mind a resting-place and a rallying point. As in Germany, the tendency of the political institutions to repress energy, independence, and individual action, seems to have driven the national mind to find a channel for its activity in the wildest and most daring rationalism, restless and self-confident thinkers

revenging themselves, as it were, for servitude in the province of politics by licentiousness in that of religion,—so in America the converse will probably occur to a considerable extent, and the faith, loyalty, reverence, and contemplative devotion, to which a democratic atmosphere appears so uncongenial and repulsive, will seek for a refuge and a home in the bosom of the church.

Again: there are elements in the American character, which constitute excellent materials for religious principles to work upon, though requiring modification and direction. There is an earnestness, a reality, a seriousness about the Americans which very forcibly strikes a foreigner, accustomed 230 as he probably is to see so much of the butterfly ingredient enter into the composition of society. Every body is *at work* , and not only at work but giving his whole mind to his work perseveringly, energetically, and, when necessary, self-denyingly. Idleness is unfashionable here. I have very seldom heard mere nonsense talked in society; and the miserable *poco-curante* philosophy, which affects to think nothing worth striving for or being in earnest about, and concerns itself mainly with ensuring the least possible amount of trouble or annoyance, is almost unknown. America will never be scandalized by what has been called the “æthetic school” of churchmen, which has lately appeared both in France and among ourselves—men whose “church principles” are confined to a love of Gothic architecture, Palestrina's music, and Raphael's “early manner,” while they forget the labour, the discipline, and the self-denial which those principles essentially involve. The character of her people wants to be spiritualised; it requires the adhibition of higher and nobler motives than the love of gain, or even those less sordid principles which operate more largely among them than we are generally aware of—the principles, namely, of emulation, love of adventure, national pride, and contempt for inactivity; and this is exactly what the doctrines of the church supply. It 231 is difficult to imagine a more admirable product (if one may use the expression) than would result from a due combination of the Catholic and the American elements of character.

Another eminently favourable trait in the American character is sympathy with the poor, except where the unfortunate prejudice of colour intercepts its action. In no country

have I seen charitable institutions so humanely and liberally conducted, or observed so marked a disposition to lean towards the side of the weak and the oppressed.* Now the great problem of the present day is, *what to do with the poor.* It seems, indeed, to be an inevitable result of the accumulation of wealth, and increase of population, that the power of labour to make terms with capital should gradually diminish, and the condition of the poor consequently deteriorate (while their political importance increases); and one peculiar vocation of the church at this time is to counteract, as far as it is possible, this tendency, or at least its evil effects, by inculcating almsgiving and self-denial, the danger of riches, and the claims of poverty. Here, then, is another point where she will find sympathy

* Even the administration of their poor-law, which I think extremely injudicious, errs on the side of too great laxity and leniency.

232 in America, and a disposition to co-operate with and to obey her.

As I said before, however, I do not anticipate that the church will make any extensive progress in America; *on the whole* , the opposing influences decidedly outweigh those which are more favourable: but I do indulge the hope that she may prove an ark of refuge for the “few noble” that are to be found in every age and country, “faithful among the faithless” and ultimately become the nurse of a more spiritual and elevated school than has yet appeared in America of literature, philosophy, and art.*

* May not an indication of such a tendency be perceived in the movement towards Catholicism, which I have described as taking place among the New-England Independents?

In the nature of the present organisation of the church in America, and the working of her government, there is much to interest an English churchman, particularly at this time, when the public voice seems likely to call for a restoration of legislative powers to his own church. This is not, indeed, the place to give a regular account of the institution, and of the mode in which its affairs are conducted, particularly as the general outlines of the

subject are now tolerably well known; but I must say that every thing which I have seen, 233 heard, and read here, tends to convince me more and more fully of the desirableness and practicability of such a restoration as I have alluded to. Indeed the argument in favour of it appears to me (both intrinsically and from analogy) so obvious as altogether to throw the *onus probandi* upon those who adopt the contrary opinion. A corporation of any kind which has not the power to make bye-laws for its own regulation is (or at least it appears to an Englishman) a practical anomaly. There is not a municipal body, or a club, or a canal company, which would subsist for an hour if Such a principle were applied to it. Are the functions of the church less important? Do they require less exclusive attention? Are her operations less complicated? Are the circumstances with which she has to deal less fluctuating, that she is to be bound hand and foot, and in that condition either left to stiffen and torpefy, or delivered over to be dealt with by a parliament, at best utterly incompetent to manage ecclesiastical affairs, and which may now at any given time contain a majority composed of her avowed enemies?

We are told that a legislative assembly would be inconvenient and objectionable, that we should have stormy debates, and controverted elections, and, above all, that we are very very well off as we are.

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Now, with respect to the first of these objections, it is sufficient to say that the same applies equally to all deliberative assemblies of every kind, to a parliament, a court of directors, a municipal council. Debate and controversy are no doubt inconveniences, and it would be very pleasant if things could be well managed without them; but the question is, whether they are inconveniences of such a nature as to countervail the advantages of those assemblies with which they are inseparably connected, so that, rather than incur them, the individuals composing constituencies should be left, each to manage his own affairs, or rather to remain altogether without management. If such an objection be allowed, Constantine ought not to have convoked the council of Nice, Elizabeth ought not to have summoned the Convocation of 1562; in short, precisely in those times when, in

consequence of important differences existing in the church, authoritative decisions are most needed, it is to be considered inexpedient to organise a body capable of making them.

But I assert, that the example of the American church may fairly be considered as indicative that no such evil consequences as are apprehended would follow: I have made the fullest inquiries upon this subject from all parties, and have at 235 present in my possession the journals of many general and state conventions of the church, and I can neither hear accounts, nor discover appearances, of any such unseemly or acrimonious contentions, any such tyrannical proceedings on the part of a majority, any such ill-considered changes, as the opponents of an ecclesiastical legislature seem to anticipate in England. Not only do all agree that the system works well, but they cannot conceive the possibility of a contrary system working at all; they would think the proposition as absurd and anomalous as that of doing without a Congress would be.

As to those who tell us that no inconvenience has resulted from the defective organization of our church, and that things have gone on very well without a legislative body, they must presume on our either possessing a very imperfect knowledge of history, or a very low standard of what the administration of church affairs ought to be. When we look back over the last hundred years, it is impossible to avoid seeing that the compulsory inaction of the body communicated itself to her members. The church was asleep; most of those who retained a high degree of spiritual life and energy were either driven out from her, or else remained only to forget and undermine her most important doctrines; the immense population 236 which grew up in the manufacturing districts and the colonies, was contentedly left unprovided for; the parochial system remained unextended and unmodified, to suit the altered circumstances of the country; her executive department was allowed to drop into the hands of unauthorised and irregular societies; her discipline became a mere name, and her ordinances and ceremonies fell into neglect and disrepute. Within the last ten years the Irish church has submitted to the loss and the shame of seeing half her bishoprics suppressed, because the state wanted their incomes—a

circumstance which ought surely to have no bearing whatever on the establishment or maintenance of Christian bishoprics. An extremely important move has moreover been made towards an alliance with Protestant Germany, upon which, whatever one's individual opinion upon the case may be, it was, at least, desirable that the church should have been consulted. Is this the satisfactory state of things with which we are told to remain contented? Again, I say, look at the American church, in her administrative department, —all is activity, order, and regularity; and this, although she has far inferior materials to work with, and infinitely smaller means at her disposal. Every where there are signs of a superintending authority; 237 new dioceses are admitted, new parishes formed, in proportion to the extension of the demand for them; domestic and foreign missions are maintained and regulated; canons are altered to suit the constantly fluctuating circumstances of the times; coadjutor bishops are appointed when necessary; intercourse with foreign churches is considered and conducted;—in short, each emergency that arises is met and provided for in a regular and proper way: whereas, with us, when any measure affecting the “Establishment” is to be carried, what is the mode of proceeding? If the minister of the day happens to be a “friend of the church,” he probably consults one or two of the bishops, and either persuades them to agree, or perhaps settles the matter by a mutual compromise, and then overwhelms all objectors by an appeal to the authority of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London. If he relies rather on the support of the dissenting interest, he omits the formality of any consultation at all, but gets his bill passed through parliament, and never troubles his head about what the church thinks upon the matter.—Why should he? She is passive, helpless, dumb, and sure to acquiesce in any thing and every thing that he may do.

It is impossible to imagine a more painful contrast than this, which must strike every churchman, 238 between the manner in which ecclesiastical affairs are managed in America and in England; and I have no hesitation in expressing my conviction, that if the disadvantages and incapacities under which the Church of England now labours be the necessary result of her connection with the state, the latter ought to be relinquished,

rather than the former permanently submitted to. I feel deeply the advantages of that connection; I should be grieved indeed that the state should cease to recognise the existence of religious truth, by professing and supporting the Apostolic Faith; I should dread the judgments which might well be expected to follow upon its doing so: but I can never forget that we have prior obligations and higher duties than those of citizens and subjects, and that we are therefore by no means concluded by an appeal to our sense of the latter; a writ of error lies to a superior court. I cannot, however, see that there is any incompatibility between freedom of ecclesiastical action in all things necessary or desirable, and a far more intimate connection than that which exists in England between the church and the temporal power. Difficulties may no doubt arise, and occasionally confusion of jurisdictions, from the mixed nature of the subject matter, but there is no reason to suppose that they would be insuperable: and, even if they were greater than they are, it 239 would be necessary to grapple with them; for it is plainly impossible that the present state of things, giving to one party all its own way, and forbidding another to open its mouth, can be permanently maintained. It is defective alike in theory and in practice.

I am now about to bid farewell to America—a very reluctant farewell. I should exceedingly like to pass the winter in the Southern States, but it cannot be; *dîs aliter visum.* I will not attempt to sum up my impressions of the United States and Canada; I leave them to be gathered from my letters, on the whole, in which, as they arose, they were recorded.

I have not attempted to give any detailed description of the country, or any systematised view of the institutions and character of the people; my object has been merely to suggest to others some of the materials for reflection with which I have myself been so abundantly supplied during my tour, especially as regards the bearing which the state of things in America has upon the political and social questions of our own country.

The two most remarkable points in the American “experiment” are its novelty, and the immensity of the consequences involved in it.

The constitution of America stands, as far as I know, alone and unprecedented, not only 240 throughout the experience of mankind, but even among the theories of speculative politicians. It resembles as little the republics enacted in Greece and Rome, in Italy and Germany, as those imagined by More, Harrington, and Sidney. It embodies indeed the legitimate conclusion from Locke's arguments, but in a form of which he hardly seems to have contemplated the possibility. The paternal theory of government is completely abandoned; and the democratic theory is so strictly and consistently carried out (as far as in the nature of things can be done), by means of repeated elections, and by instructions perpetually supplied, that, though the representative system is retained for its mechanical convenience, the government is not merely the organ through which the deliberate and permanent will of the majority is expressed, but the mirror upon which every passing cloud is shadowed, the instrument which echoes every fleeting whisper, the weather-cock which vibrates to every fitful gust of the “popular breeze.”* Now this, I maintain, is a

* The only exception to the general rule is the constitution of the United States' Court. It presents a singular aspect of comparative permanence amidst the surrounding mutations. As Mackintosh said of the British constitutution, in the days of Napoleon's ascendancy, “It stands alone, and it stands amidst ruins.” How long will this inconsistency be tolerated?

241 phenomenon hitherto unknown and unthought of; the Americans have adopted (and acted upon) the principle of Rob Roy,—

“Of old things all are over old, Of good things none are good enough: We'll show that we can help to mould A world of other stuff.”

And when we consider that *it is* (almost literally) a world that they are moulding, that at no great distance of time they must become, by the mere operation of physical causes, (if they remain united), the greatest and most powerful nation in the world, and that with their greatness and their power the influence of their principles and character must proportionably increase, it does seem to me astonishing that any other country or people

should be regarded as at all comparable to America in interest and importance, or attract anything like the same degree of grave and thoughtful observation.

To Englishmen these remarks especially apply, from the resemblance already existing between the Americans and themselves, and the tendency which may be observed to increasing assimilation. I do not mean to say that Great Britain can ever become Americanized,—of course she cannot; physical circumstances forbid it, even though (which I do not believe) a nation could ever VOL. II. M 242 thoroughly get rid of the past, with all the innumerable influences which have been transmitted from it: but there are points of similarity, as well as of contrast, enough to afford us lessons, sometimes of encouragement, oftener of warning, always of instruction.

The magnificent provinces, too, of British North America, forming the last bond of common nationality which remains between the Old World and the New, combining, in a great measure, the traditions of the one with the prospects of the other; the home of so many of our countrymen and friends; the most important link of that mighty chain which our diminutive island has woven round the globe;—what a host of questions are suggested by the consideration of them! Are they to be British or American, independent or united, Catholic or sectarian? Upon what system ought they to be governed, as an integral part of the empire, or *permanently* as provinces? What prospects do they afford to emigrants? I do not say that a satisfactory solution of all or of any of these questions can be arrived at as the result of a hasty tour; but I do say that, even in such a visit as mine, a traveller may acquire a vast deal of information upon the subject of them: new ideas will be forced upon him, and the constant intercourse which he will enjoy with the inhabitants of 243 the country will give him an advantage in forming his opinions which he can hope for in no other part of the world: in short, I have come to the conclusion that this is the first country to which an English traveller should direct his steps.

And now for a detestable voyage (for how can a winter voyage across the North Atlantic be otherwise than detestable?), sea-sickness, storms, and horrors of all kinds; with the

prospect, however, of speedily enjoying the happiest moment (to a British traveller) of every tour,—that on which he touches British soil again.

THE END.

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